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## Volume 46 No. 2 (Summer 2012)

Noel T. Manning II  
*Gardner-Webb University*

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An abstract painting of a face, rendered in vibrant green and orange tones. The face is composed of thick, textured brushstrokes, giving it a sense of depth and movement. The background is a mix of warm, fiery colors like red and yellow, suggesting a sunset or a fire. The overall style is expressive and emotional.

# Gardner-Webb

THE MAGAZINE

VOLUME 46, NUMBER 2

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CELEBRATING CHEROKEE CULTURE THROUGH  
**HERITAGE, HOPE AND HEALING**

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**HISTORIC COMMENCEMENT**

OUTSTANDING FEMALE GRADUATE GAINS  
**DOG'S EYE VIEW**

GWU ATHLETES PROVIDE  
**DISASTER RELIEF**



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# Gardner-Webb

## THE MAGAZINE

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*Volume 46, Number 2, 2012*

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*The Gardner-Webb Magazine is the official magazine for Gardner-Webb University. The Office of University Communications and the Division of University Advancement publish this magazine.*

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*Special thanks to the Cherokee Historical Association, the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, and the Greater Cherokee Tourism Council for their contributions to this issue.*

**On the Cover:** During the 2012-13 academic year, Gardner-Webb University will explore the cultural heritage of one of the region's first and most deeply-rooted people, the Cherokee. This issue of The Gardner-Webb Magazine is devoted to a few Gardner-Webb connections to the greater Cherokee story. For information about educational events surrounding the Cherokee in 2012-13, contact Noel T. Manning at 704-406-4631.

Cherokee artist Joshua L. Adams provided the cover art, "Fear not the Shadow," for this issue. More of his work can be seen online at [joshuaadamsart.com](http://joshuaadamsart.com).

*"Southern Rogue" by  
Joshua L. Adams*

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## TWO POWERFUL MESSAGES

... were presented on our campus this semester. The contexts of the messages were different, but the themes were remarkably similar, in fact identical—the triumph of forgiveness and compassion over hatred and brutality. Both messages are leading even now to commitments to service and thus resonate in a wonderful way with the purpose and values of Gardner-Webb University.

### “AS LONG AS I COULD FEEL COMPASSION”

After learning something of the story of Amanda Lindhout on a segment of the Today Show, we felt strongly that this was a message our students needed to hear. Ms. Lindhout was gracious in working a trip to Gardner-Webb into a very strenuous schedule and spoke at a Dimensions program. In 2008, Amanda Lindhout traveled to Somalia as a freelance journalist to research a story on the millions of people affected by two decades of war, drought and famine. Three days after arriving in the country, she was kidnapped by teenage criminals outside of the capital city, Mogadishu, and spent the next 460 days as a hostage.

As harrowing as the account of her captivity was, it was apparent that she was withholding the most graphic descriptions of the deprivation and brutality she endured. At one time while being harshly abused physically, her feeling of hatred reached the point that she began to fear that she would lose her sense of humanity, that she would “snap,” and that she did not know what would result—perhaps insanity, perhaps even death. At that moment a wave of compassion came over her as she realized that her suffering was physical while that of these boys was the suffering of a lifetime. They were orphans who had never gone to school, who had known only deprivation and brutality, who had seen family members and others brutalized and killed before their eyes. Now older men who controlled them for their own evil purposes were offering these boys money and a sense of belonging. Along with that realization she remembered small acts of kindness by some of them. “I knew that I would never lose my humanity as long as I could feel compassion.”

After her release, Lindhout’s way of coming to grips with her experience was to establish a foundation—Global Enrichment Foundation—to support educational opportunities for Somalis. When one of history’s worst famines devastated Somalia, Lindhout, frustrated by the slowness of relief agencies, organized and personally led convoys of food and medical supplies into Somalia.

Immediately after her address in Dimensions, students waited in line to speak with her personally, several of them still in tears.

### SHE BELIEVED THAT SHE COULD START A CHAIN REACTION.

Rachel Scott was the first person killed in the shooting on April 20, 1999 at Columbine High School in Colorado. In the worst school shooting in the nation’s history, twelve students and one teacher were murdered. After her death, her diaries and a number of testimonials revealed a young woman determined to overcome cruelty and injustice through kindness and empathy. The mission of the organization she has inspired, “Rachel’s Challenge,” is to motivate, “equip and empower every person to create a permanent positive culture change in their school, business and community by starting a chain reaction of kindness and compassion.” While the program has a broad application, it has been especially effective in preventing violence and bullying in schools.

Gardner-Webb has partnered with Rachel’s Challenge and WCNC-TV in Charlotte to support the program in our area. This year, we hosted 2,700 ninth and tenth graders from Cleveland County Schools in the Paul Porter Arena to experience the Rachel’s Challenge program. Gardner-Webb students are working with teams of students in each high school to carry on “Friends of Rachel” clubs to promote the goals of the program.

The messages of Amanda Lindhout and Rachel Scott have much in common—forgiveness and compassion overcoming hatred and violence—and both are making a difference in the world. So too are the people of Gardner-Webb University under the banner of “Pro Deo et Humanitate.”

In God’s Service,



A. Frank Bonner  
President, Gardner-Webb University



## GARDNER-WEBB PREPARES TO LAUNCH PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Written by Jeanie Groh

University officials have announced that Gardner-Webb will launch a physician assistant program beginning January 2014. The program will help fill the healthcare industry’s need for primary care providers by training medical professionals for the primary care field. Dr. Gregory Davenport, a physician assistant with a doctorate in health science, is the newly hired dean and program director.

The program will last 27 months and will be broken into two parts. During the first 15 months, students will take classes five days a week, for approximately eight hours a day. The second half of the program will feature hands-on learning experiences in local hospitals and doctors’ offices.

Davenport is an internationally known author, speaker and wilderness survival expert. He has served in the United States Air Force as a survival, evasion, resistance and escape specialist (SERE), been an emergency medicine physician assistant in extremely remote locations, and has even hosted his own show on the History Channel. Although Davenport has lived a highly adventurous and successful life in the limelight, he calls this opportunity a “higher calling.”



Dr. Gregory Davenport

## GARDNER-WEBB’S ONLINE GRAD BUSINESS PROGRAMS EARN #1 NATIONAL RANKING

In its rankings of America’s Top Online Education Programs for 2012, the *U.S. News and World Report* named Gardner-Webb University’s Online Graduate Program in Business first in the nation for “Student Services and Technology.”

Gardner-Webb ranked 15th in “Faculty Credentials and Training,” 27th in “Teaching Practices and Student Engagement,” and was one of only 14 institutions nationwide to make the Honor Roll for high average rankings across all categories. Gardner-Webb was also the only Carolinas institution to rank in the top 15 in any category, let alone two.

“This was a total team effort,” said a beaming Dr. Anthony Negbenebor, dean of the Godbold School of Business. “Credit must be given to our president, Dr. Frank Bonner, our administrators and faculty, and most certainly our students. The performance of our students made this accomplishment come true.”

More information is available at [usnews.com/rankings](http://usnews.com/rankings).



GWU students helping with the Potato Project

## GARDNER-WEBB NAMED TO FIFTH CONSECUTIVE PRESIDENT’S HONOR ROLL FOR SERVICE

For the fifth consecutive year, Gardner-Webb University has been selected for the 2012 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and the U.S. Department of Education.

In the past year alone, 2,034 Gardner-Webb students have organized food drives, harvested potatoes and launched a community garden. They have provided disaster relief and rebuilt dilapidated homes. They have cleaned trash from roadsides and state rivers, dug irrigation trenches, tutored at-risk students and more. In total, they logged 39,265 hours of intentional community service.

Best of all, said Community Engagement Coordinator Stephanie Richey, those statistics hold no allure for Gardner-Webb students. “The wonderful part about the President’s Honor Roll,” said Richey, “is that the activities and statistics we record on the application reflect what our students are already doing, regardless of the Honor Roll. We’re thrilled for the honor, but our students don’t do service to get recognized—they get recognized because they do service.”

CNCS oversees the Honor Roll in collaboration with the U.S. Departments of Education and Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact, and the American Council on Education.





## GWU STUDENTS FIND SUCCESS IN INAUGURAL ETHICS BOWL

Written by Travis Sherrill

A Gardner-Webb University team participated in the inaugural North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU) Ethics Bowl at Meredith College, finishing third out of 14 schools.

This was the first ethics bowl competition of any type for Gardner-Webb University. The students who participated were Cedric Starr, Samantha Raber, Daniel Hyppolite, and Andrea Thomas.

According to Dr. Scott Shauf, professor of religious studies and the team's faculty advisor, the students learned a lot that will help them not only in the next competition but throughout the rest of their time at Gardner-Webb.

"It was a great experience for the team. I think we all learned some things about ethical thinking, and the challenge of coming up with creative ethical solutions to complex real-world problems was both fun and intellectually stimulating. Interacting with students from other North Carolina universities and members of the business and government communities added to the value of the event."

## DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE PROGRAM RECOMMENDED FOR NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

Based on an extensive accreditation review, the Gardner-Webb University School of Nursing's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) has been recommended for initial accreditation by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc. (NLNAC). The NLNAC has accredited each of the School's other professional nursing programs.

The initial accreditation would stand through 2017, when the Program would face a second accreditation review. The final decision by the NLNAC Commission will be announced this summer.

"This accreditation is extremely important for Gardner-Webb," said the School's Dean Dr. Susie Beck-Little. "It is not a requirement for our program that we achieve national accreditation, but it's an expectation we have set for ourselves because of our commitment to constantly be better for this University and, most importantly, for our students."

Gardner-Webb is one of only two N.C. schools to offer the DNP.

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Miss GWU 2012 Sara Jolley

## SARA JOLLEY CROWNED MISS GARDNER-WEBB 2012

Public relations graduate Sara Jolley of Lincolnton, N.C., is Miss Gardner-Webb 2012. The former Miss Lincoln County Apple Queen ('08) was one of 20 applicants and 12 contestants to compete for the Miss GWU title this year.

Jolley's poise and grace impressed the judges throughout the pageant, most notably during the talent portion, when she delivered an original monologue about a friend whose mother died recently of cancer. For her platform, Jolley spoke passionately about combating what she calls "a psychology of failure" in young children, a defeatist lack of self-confidence that swallows up their ability to achieve. Jolley hopes the crown will open doors to share her message of affirmation with local school children. Upon graduation, Jolley was also given a Peer Leader Award for her service as a role model to first-year students at Gardner-Webb, and was named to the list of Who's Who Among Students in American College and Universities.

Joining Jolley on the pageant winner's platform was First Runner Up Amber Gold, a freshman music education major from Boiling Springs, N.C. Senior Verhonda Crawford, of Chesnee, S.C., was named Second Runner Up and won "Most Talented" for her dramatic monologue. Breanna Davenport, a senior athletic training and sports management major from Glade Spring, Va., won "Miss Photogenic." Hannah Hellyer, a junior international business major from Stirling, Ontario, was voted "Miss Congeniality" by her fellow contestants.

## EMBRACING THE HUNGER

*Gardner-Webb Community Invested in Hunger Games Phenomenon*



Gardner-Webb University's Broyhill Adventure Course (BAC) and communication studies program used the excitement for the premier of the "The Hunger Games" movie, partially filmed in Shelby, to strengthen the community.

Weeks before the premiere, the BAC sponsored "The Hunger Games Challenge," a community event that forced participant "tributes" to use balance, communication skills, fortitude and cunning to overcome numerous ropes course challenges. The event featured a nitro crossing challenge, an initiative wall, an acid river, a zen balance platform, and a climbing challenge, among others.

Resident film critic Noel T. Manning II, director of University relations and adjunct professor of film studies at Gardner-Webb, also hosted a panel discussion on "Screen Adaptations and North Carolina Filmmaking" at the Cleveland Memorial Library.

Manning's guests were author Robert Whitlow; film director Gary Wheeler, who adapted Whitlows novels for the screen; and Beth Petty, director of the Charlotte Area Film Commission.

The panelists offered "behind-the-scenes insight about how filmmakers and directors translate a book, like *The Hunger Games*, into a film script," Manning said. The event was particularly timely since hundreds of local citizens had just read Suzanne Collins's novels as part of a Cleveland County Library community read event.

"As an educator, any time we can translate the public's enthusiasm for entertainment into a learning opportunity, it's a real thrill," Manning said.

As it turns out, there was also a more direct connection between Gardner-Webb and *The Hunger Games* movie. Several students and alumni were used as extras in the film, and the Gardner-Webb campus was even scouted as a possible filming location.

While the campus wasn't chosen, the property of longtime Gardner-Webb trustee and supporter Wade Shepherd was. In the film, scenes that take place in The Seam, a section of District 12 where Katniss and Peeta live, were shot on the site of the former Henry River Mill Village in Hildebran, N.C. Today, that property belongs to Shepherd.

Many of the houses and structures in the film's District 12 are authentic Henry River homes and office buildings, still standing on Shepherd's land. In fact, the building used for Peeta's family bakery once housed the village's general store, post office, and the executive offices for the mill.

Shepherd even donated the tree that Katniss hides behind while she peeks at Peeta, just before Peeta tosses her a burnt piece of bread.

"It's unreal," Shepherd said of the scale of the film production. "If you've never seen [the process of Hollywood film production], you can't imagine it. It's massive—the number of people involved, the equipment involved. But they know what they're doing. There's no doubt about that."

Since the filming, Shepherd's property has become a tourist attraction, with hundreds of people showing up for their own glimpse of District 12. Shepherd himself has even been interviewed on several national media outlets, including *The Today Show*.

"Listen," he joked with the GWU Magazine, "for an old country boy to be shown on *The Today Show* in New York City, that's a step up."



GWU Trustee Wade Shepherd outside "District 12".



## STUDENT SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN BRINGS NEEDTOBREATHE TO BOILING SPRINGS

The Dove Award-winning band NEEDTOBREATHE rocked a crowd of 1,600 inside Paul Porter Arena, including fans from as far as Cincinnati, Ohio, and San Jose, Calif., thanks in part to a persistent social media campaign by Gardner-Webb students.

Starting in the fall of 2011, students began posting YouTube videos, Twitter posts and Facebook blurbs asking NEEDTOBREATHE, a band known for their high energy live shows, to bring their act to Gardner-Webb. The crusade caught the attention of several band members, who instructed their agents to call Gardner-Webb.

As the band said from the stage, the social media campaign captured their minds, but it was the GWU students' passion for humanitarian service that touched their hearts. The students decided to use the concert event to raise awareness about human trafficking and to benefit Project Rescue, an international ministry that rescues thousands of women and children from trafficking and sex slavery. NEEDTOBREATHE is a frequent supporter of Project Rescue.

In fact, just days after the concert, Project Rescue hit the social media waves to thank the Gardner-Webb crowd for purchasing 249 Project Rescue t-shirts, which funded scholarships for eight rescued women to attend college.

The concert was only part of the students' efforts. They also designed an entire awareness week, blowing the lid off the often-silenced issue of human trafficking, especially in the U.S. The week featured guest speakers, documentary screenings, and a collection drive for Asheville's Hope House, a haven for victims of sex trafficking.

"This whole endeavor was student-led," said GWU Community Engagement Coordinator Stephanie Richey. "It was incredibly gratifying to watch students taking leadership, not only in bringing a concert to campus but in fighting this horrible worldwide issue. They really wanted to discover how they could do their part."

## GARDNER-WEBB AWARDS NEARLY 700 DEGREES IN SPRING 2012 COMMENCEMENT

While every commencement is a momentous occasion, the Spring 2012 exercises were full of milestones for Gardner-Webb University and its graduates. For the first time, a record three separate commencement ceremonies were broadcast online via live stream. In total, nearly 700 degrees were awarded, including the University's 25,000th degree since becoming a senior college in 1971.

Gardner-Webb also awarded its 7,000th bachelor's degree in business, its 1,500th associate's degree in nursing, its 1,000th bachelor's degree in nursing, and its first ever Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees.

In total, six graduates offered commencement speeches throughout the day, each of them sharing their own perspective on the Gardner-Webb experience. Several, like Chelsea Renee Usher, an English graduate from Hendersonville, N.C., especially thanked their professors, whom Usher called a "real and genuine" group of "brilliant and engaged teachers." Others, like Savanna R. Yount, a psychology graduate from Lattimore, N.C., focused on the life-altering potential of the University's core values, like "acceptance, compassion and empathy."

But no address was more unique than that of Adam Reep, a human services graduate from Troutman, N.C. A veteran of the U.S. 82nd Army Airborne Division, Reep experienced horrific violence during several terms in Afghanistan, leading him to abandon his faith in a loving and benevolent God. But, he said, thanks to the Christian character of Gardner-Webb's mission and its people, Reep received more than just a quality education. "I discovered what I was missing. My new Gardner-Webb family has given me a new perspective. I have found God again, or in reality, maybe for the first time."

Several graduates were also honored for outstanding leadership, citizenship, and academic excellence. The Most Outstanding Male Graduate medal was presented to music graduate Matthew Thomas Lineberger of Morganton, N.C.

Usher was awarded both the Most Outstanding Female Graduate medal and one of three Senior Scholastic Awards for a perfect 4.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) during her tenure. Also earning that honor were Amanda Marie Jefferies, an elementary education graduate from Matthews, N.C., and Jane Elizabeth Savage, an English graduate from Marietta, Ga.

Five students were honored with the Greater Opportunities for Adult Learners (GOAL) Senior Scholastic Award for maintaining the highest cumulative GPA in their class: Carly Patricia Nicks Sotillo, an accounting graduate from Hickory, N.C., and four accounting graduates from Rutherfordton, N.C.: David Blake Caulder, Chad William Cooper, Daniel Reed Hudson, and Samuel Nathon Staton.

Three graduates were also commissioned as Second Lieutenants in the United States Army. Monique Francis, a psychology graduate from Roanoke, Va., was presented the emblem denoting her rank, a bar of gold, by her grandmother and father, Sheila Hickman and Lloyd Francis. Andrew Morris, a Columbus, N.C., native who received his master's in business administration, was presented his gold bar by his wife, Nicole Morris. Brandon Smith, a political science graduate from Winston Salem, N.C., was presented his bar by his parents, Guy and Rezuba Smith.





INSTRUCTOR PARTICIPATES IN EXPLORATORY CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN BAPTISTS AND ORTHODOX

Teams representing the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople recently held exploratory talks on the island of Crete that could lead to formal international dialogue between Baptist and Orthodox Christians. Dr. Steven Harmon, adjunct instructor of Christian theology at Gardner-Webb, was part of the three-person BWA delegation.

The two teams resolved that any international dialogue should strive to increase mutual understanding, to explore a common Christian witness between the churches, and to encourage cooperative action on ethical and moral issues.

“As is the case with any ecumenical conversation, we hope to identify convergences between our churches, and possibly identify some ways we could work together in missions, evangelization, or addressing certain social issues with a common voice,” Harmon said. “For example, the current Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, is a passionate advocate for ecological justice. Perhaps Baptists and Orthodox Christians can work together to bring that issue to the forefront of the world’s attention.”



Dr. Steven Harmon



GARDNER-WEBB DONATES USED COMPUTERS TO LOCAL ELECTRONICS RECYCLING PROGRAM

Gardner-Webb University Technology Services recently donated more than 150 used computers and electronic devices to Cleveland Vocational Industries’ (CVI) Electronics Recycling (e-recycling) program. The donation cut down on environmental waste and bolstered CVI’s efforts to take the lead in the local e-recycling industry.

“Many people don’t realize that you can no longer dump electronic items at a landfill,” said Mike Reynolds, director of CVI’s Green Electronic Asset Recycling (GEAR) program. “So the e-recycling industry is really going to develop over time.”

CVI is a non-profit agency in Shelby created in 1984 to provide employment and training opportunities for individuals who have functional limitations, as a way to improve their quality of life. “The GEAR program gives our clients the chance to learn a new job skill. It’s great training and exciting for them to do something like dismantle a computer.”



Dr. Larry Hovis,  
CBFNC executive coordinator

GWU DIVINITY SCHOOL HOSTS COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP DAY

Gardner-Webb’s School of Divinity recently held Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) Day to spotlight the organization’s relationship with the University. The event brought together CBF leaders, CBF student scholars, GWU faculty and staff, and members of the faith community to worship, reflect, and plan for the future.

Established in 1991, CBF is a fellowship of churches and individuals with a mission to bring Baptists together for Christ-centered ministry. They provide ministry assistance to support things like Christian education, mission work (in-state and abroad), and church planting. CBFNC provides scholarship assistance to students engaged in theological education at Gardner-Webb.

“We are called to expand the Kingdom of God. Even if there are only a few involved in the work, God will say, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant,’” said Ka’thy Gore Chappell, CBFNC’s leadership development coordinator.

Kyle Chastain, a Gardner-Webb divinity student and the minister of students at Double Springs Baptist Church in Shelby, N.C., was one of those scholars attending the event. “I am so appreciative of my scholarship. It has enabled me to not only further my education but get a firm grasp on God’s calling for my life.”

GARDNER-WEBB UNIVERSITY LOSES DISTINGUISHED ADMINISTRATOR, PROFESSOR AND DEAR FRIEND

*Dr. Gayle Bolt Price, a beloved professor, dean and associate provost at Gardner-Webb for over 20 years, died in March after a battle with cancer. Price was 61.*

*“Gayle was one of my closest friends,” said Dr. June Hobbs, chair of the English department. “We as a community and I personally will be drinking from wells she dug for a long time. She was a passionate person who lived her life with an intensity I’ll probably never see again.”*

*A native of Greenwood, S.C., Price joined the Gardner-Webb faculty in 1991 as a professor of English, and eventually chaired that department. She founded and directed both the Learning Assistance Program and the Writing Center, coordinated the Writing Across the Curriculum Program, and served as dean of the Graduate School. In 2007, she was named associate provost for graduate and professional studies, the position in which she worked tirelessly until her death.*

*A past winner of the Gardner-Webb Excellence in Teaching Award, Price’s commitment to professional excellence was surpassed only by her commitment to her children.*

*“I remember the day Gayle was honored with the Excellence in Teaching Award. She was not present to receive it because her daughter was receiving an award at school that same day. As a young parent at the time, it spoke volumes to me that being present for her daughter was more important to Gayle than basking in her own accolades,” said Dr. Tracy Jessup, vice president for Christian life and service and Price’s colleague on the Senior Staff.*

*“Gayle had extraordinary dedication, an incredible work ethic. She was an exceptionally competent administrator, both tremendously effective and efficient. The testimony to that is in the caliber of the schools she oversaw,” said GWU President Dr. Frank Bonner. “She will be dearly missed.”*

*Though she finished her career as a full-time administrator, Price always thought of herself as a teacher, having taught for more than 35 years at a number of institutions including North Greenville University, Furman University, the University of Pittsburgh, the University of South Carolina and Robert Morris College, as well as the S.C. public school system.*

*In beautiful eulogies, her children expressed Price’s enduring impression on them as a mother. Fittingly, both referred to the lessons she taught them, and to the ways her legacy and her memory still guides and instructs their steps.*

*Her daughter Emily said, “Even when we found out how badly sick she was, she encouraged me to see the little miracles happening all around us. ‘People are changing,’ she said. Until her last breath, I was my mother’s student.”*

*“She taught me to love to live, and to live to love,” said her son David. “The world is more beautiful because my mother was in it.”*



“We’ll be drinking from wells she dug for a long time.”



FORMER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, NEWT GINGRICH,  
THROWS OUT PITCH AT GWU BASEBALL GAME



Just one week before ending his campaign for the Republican presidential nomination, Newt Gingrich threw out the ceremonial first pitch and mingled with the crowd at a Gardner-Webb baseball game against North Carolina A&T at John Henry Moss Stadium on April 25. The candidate arrived a half hour before the first pitch, donned a Gardner-Webb baseball cap, and posed for pictures with Head Coach Rusty Stroupe and the Runnin’ Bulldog players. He also walked along the edge of the home plate bleachers, mingling with fans and introducing himself to Gardner-Webb students in the crowd. He then accompanied Stroupe to home plate as an honorary assistant coach for the exchanging of lineups with the A&T coaching staff, before tossing out the game’s first pitch. Gingrich was cordial and relaxed, joking with fans and members of the media alike. When asked what sort of pitch he would throw, he quipped, “A ball.”

Just hours before throwing out the pitch, Gingrich had made the first public allusion to the possibility of his bowing out of the Republican presidential race. The event was one of several Cleveland County stops for Gingrich during his tour of the Tar Heel state, including a lunch with the Kings Mountain GOP at the Cherokee Street Tavern in Kings Mountain and a visit to Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy in Mooresboro. “Mr. Gingrich’s people called us and asked if they could stop by, and we agreed. It’s a rare occasion that you have a chance to welcome a current presidential candidate to your campus. When given an opportunity like that, whether the candidate is a Republican or Democrat really doesn’t factor into our consideration,” Manning said. “We would have done the same for President Obama, Mr. Romney, or any number of other presidential candidates, too.”

GARDNER-WEBB SENDS 71 PEOPLE ON SPRING BREAK MISSION TRIPS

Seventy-one students, faculty and staff spread throughout six mission teams put Gardner-Webb’s core values of faith, service and leadership into action across the globe during Spring Break 2012. The six trips doubled 2011’s number of spring break trips through the University’s Office of Christian Life and Service. The teams helped build a Baptist Men’s mission center in Shelby, N.C.; led wellness clinics and conducted health assessments in Jinotega, Nicaragua, and Bucharest, Romania; served orphaned youth at a children’s home in Fortaleza, Brazil; supported a community outreach ministry in Lake Providence, La.; and assisted a school for the deaf in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. “I am especially proud of the great variety of projects and ministry activities our six teams pursued this year,” said Dr. Tracy Jessup, senior minister to the University. “We have a student body, and a group of faculty and staff, with a wide range of talents and abilities and a deep commitment to service on the broadest scale. It’s always rewarding to see God put those talents to use.”



GWU students in Brazil.

SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED IN HONOR OF DR. BARRY HAMBRIGHT

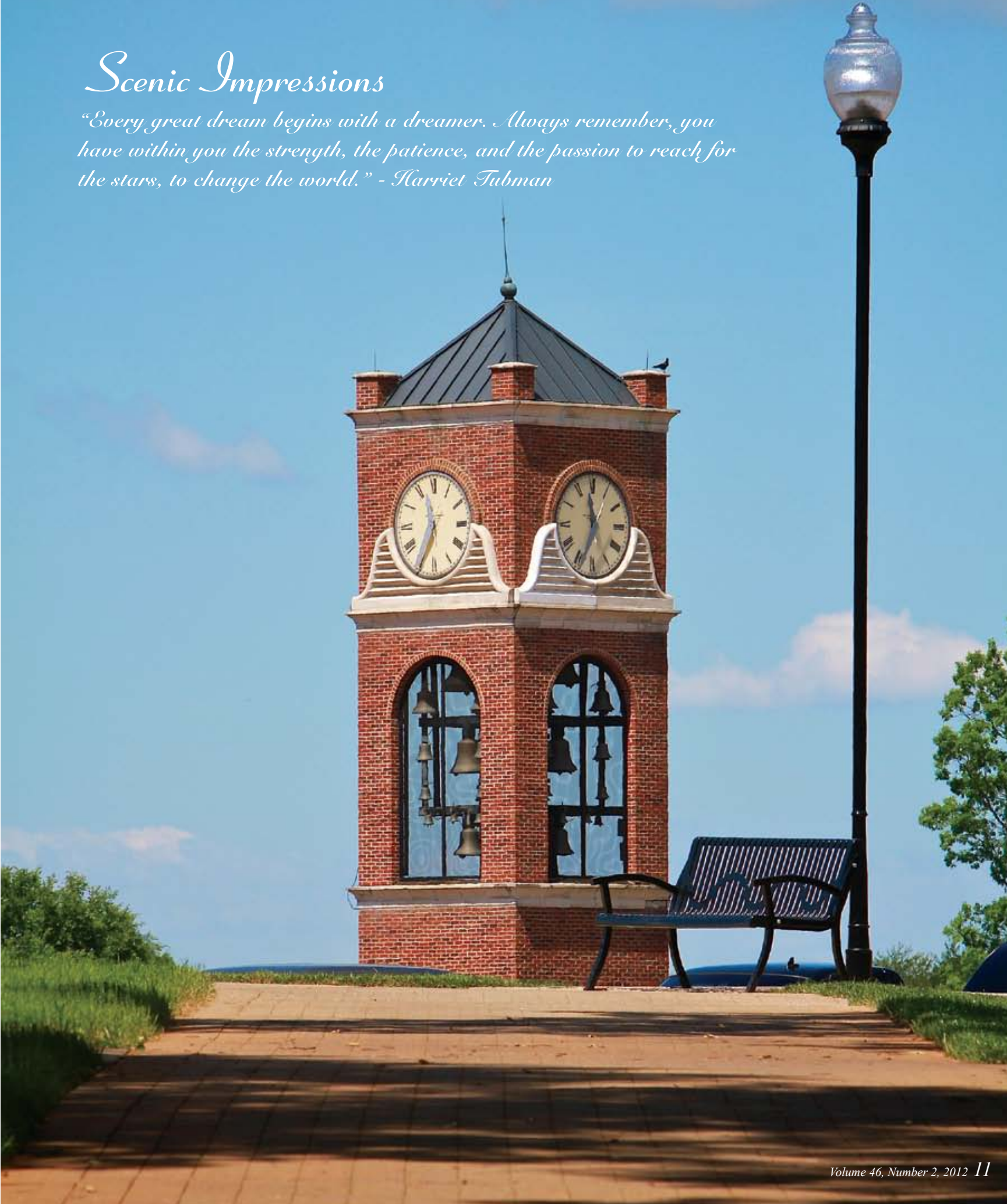


Christie Hambricht, Emmabeth Wingate and Mary Emma Hambricht

Thanks to the generosity of his family and friends, an endowed memorial scholarship in honor of longtime Gardner-Webb professor Dr. Barry Hambricht will be made available to a qualified student in the GOAL (Greater Opportunities for Adult Learners) program at Gardner-Webb University each year. The Dr. Barry Hambricht Endowed Scholarship Fund has been made possible by the generosity of Hambricht’s wife, Mary Emma Hambricht, his daughters, Christie Hambricht and Emmabeth Wingate, and many friends who were inspired by him. Hambricht was a beloved member of the Gardner-Webb faculty for over 41 years. He taught political science, history, criminal justice and human services. Hambricht was known for being an avid storyteller, a huge baseball fan, and a lover of all things New York City. He was popular with students, faculty, and administration alike, so his death on November 2, 2010 was a devastating blow to the GWU family. Gardner-Webb President Dr. Frank Bonner said, “It was largely because of Barry’s efforts that the GOAL program went from being a potentially marginal program to being part of the center of Gardner-Webb’s educational effort.”

Scenic Impressions

*“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars, to change the world.” - Harriet Tubman*





# Forgotten History: A Cherokee Chronicle

Written by Noel T. Manning, II

When the history of North Carolina—and the U.S. as a whole—gets told, the darkest and most troubling chapters are often overlooked. Still, as our region's oldest inhabitants would tell us, those chapters are vital to the greater American narrative of survival, perseverance, triumph, and hope.

Prior to the 1830s, the indigenous Cherokee lived in seven southeastern states along the southern Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountains. They were hunters and farmers, thriving on the bounty of the lands of their forebears. For the most part,

they enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship with early European settlers, and even adopted some of the customs of their non-Indian neighbors.

Cherokee historian Debra Owensby says the opportunity to educate their children in missionary schools was great motivation to maintain peace with non-Indian immigrants.

"They were a very progressive tribe," said Owensby. "Sequoyah came up with the written Cherokee language around 1821, so in a period of about 17 years, nearly the entire nation of Cherokee people were literate." In fact, by 1838, 90% of the Cherokee could read and write in their own language, while only 10% of the non-Indian population could do so.

One would think that such a progressive people would be embraced, even applauded, by Americans of like mind. Unfortunately, though, the U.S. government was more interested in Cherokee land than in the Cherokee people.

In 1830, Congress approved the Indian Removal Act, designed to relocate all Native Americans from the southeastern homelands of their ancestors to the western United States Indian Territory.

But, an intelligent people, the Cherokee resolved to retain the rights to their homeland. "The strongest part about education is that we used it to resist removal," said Birdie Lynne Harlan, public relations coordinator for the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians. "We petitioned Congress, we hired lawyers, we fought through the



Sequoyah

Supreme Court, and we used what we knew of the educational system, the social system and the legal system to maintain what we felt was important as Cherokees. And that was staying in our lands in the East."

Despite those efforts, a small group of Cherokee men signed the 1835 Treaty of New Echota, which essentially sold the Cherokee lands to the U.S. for \$5 million. Cherokee Principle Chief John Ross insisted the treaty was fraudulent, but Congress ratified the treaty in 1836 and declared a two-year deadline for the Cherokees' move to Oklahoma.

Many of the Cherokee continued to resist the Removal, but in May of 1838, the Cherokee people were rounded up from their homes, which were promptly looted by scavengers, thrown into concentration camps, and eventually forced to begin the infamous journey known today as the "Trail of Tears." In all, over 16,000 Cherokee began the nearly thousand-mile trek on foot, horse and wagon, battling sickness, poor conditions, and severe American hostility along the way. Between 4,000 and 8,000 never made it.

"It's amazing more people didn't die," said Samuel Otter, a Cherokee native. "When you lived in the mountains all your life, you know everything about it. You know how to survive, what's good to eat, how to hunt. Then you're placed out there in the desert, and you know you're going to have to adapt to that. Those who were already weak (the elderly and the sick) never had much of a chance."

But this story is not without its heroes, an untold number of Cherokees and Americans alike who fed, clothed, and even carried the pilgrims along the tear-strewn path. And then there was Tsali.

Nearly 1,100 Cherokee, including Tsali's family, chose to hide out in the North Carolina mountains rather than abandon their lands and face the trek to Oklahoma. Stories say that Tsali and his family were captured in the mountains of Cherokee, N.C. While being marched to the stockade, a scuffle occurred leaving Tsali's wife injured and his grandchild, along with two U.S. soldiers, dead. Tsali and the rest of his family escaped back into hiding.

The Cherokee believe to this day that Tsali's family were not the aggressors, but by the time the episode reached Congress, Tsali was branded a murderer and an enemy of the state.

"Tsali went into hiding in the mountains and couldn't be found," said Owensby. "Hunting parties were sent out with no results, and eventually U.S. General Winfield Scott sent word that if Tsali would give himself up to be executed for the soldier's deaths, the rest of the Cherokees hiding out would be allowed to stay in North Carolina."

Only then did Tsali walk his own trail out of the mountains, giving himself over in peace for the salvation of his people. After his death, the U.S. kept its promise, allowing the forebears of today's Eastern Band of Cherokee to remain in their homeland.

It's one thing to read Tsali's story. It's another to experience the Cherokees' resilience, fortitude and courage through relationships with children of the Trail themselves. This issue of the Gardner-Webb Magazine pays tribute to several Cherokees with Gardner-Webb connections who have devoted their lives to writing history's next chapter, and to teaching us that their story is also our own. We hope you enjoy.

***\*The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) is one of 565 federally recognized, sovereign Indian and Alaska Native nations in the United States. More information on the EBCI is available online at [www.nc-choerokee.com](http://www.nc-choerokee.com).***

***\*The original source material for this story comes from interviews Noel Manning conducted while shooting the documentary, "North Carolina Cherokee: Forgotten Memories."***





# Cycle of Life

Casey Cooper '91 Explores Past Through Historic Journey



*Writer's Note: I first met Casey when he and I were Gardner-Webb students, and I was immediately impressed with his engaging personality, wit and wisdom. We shared numerous discussions, and I found myself intrigued with his Cherokee heritage. After a summer of working on the 20th Century Fox Film "Last of the Mohicans," I felt a yearning to explore the Native Americans further, and Casey was more than willing to share. During that time, Casey was a world-class tribal dancer and traveled to schools, fairs and festivals sharing the story of his people and their culture. I had the opportunity to capture some of those Cherokee stories and images as Casey shared with me his perspectives on American Indian life for a documentary I was working on. Today, I still remember and appreciate the time he offered as I discovered something about my history as well. Casey's life after Gardner-Webb eventually took him back to Cherokee, N.C., where he is now serving as the CEO of the Cherokee Indian Hospital. A few years ago, Casey was surfing the web when he discovered a Cherokee project that changed his life. This is that story.*

*Written by Noel T. Manning, II*

In 2011, Casey Cooper embarked on a 950-mile bicycle journey through six states to commemorate the forced removal of the Cherokee people from their eastern homelands into Oklahoma Indian territory. This tragic 1838 removal has been called "The Trail of Tears."

The "Remember the Removal" bicycle ride that Cooper participated in originated in 1984 when a group of Cherokee felt compelled to travel the actual paths of their predecessors, keeping the stories and heritage of the Cherokee people alive. In 2009, the ride was resurrected, and has since been an annual tradition.

Cooper joined 15 Cherokee riders, of various skill levels, between the ages of 15-62 on this adventure from New Echota, Ga., to Tahlequah, Okla. Many were not avid cyclists, much less long-distance racers. So, to prepare for this task, Cooper and the others spent several months of training. They explored the mechanics of their bikes, techniques for the road and ways to develop endurance. They would have to become master-cyclists if they wanted to survive rides of 60-70 miles per day (for over three consecutive weeks) in unpredictable weather conditions. For these participants, it became a tangible way to reconnect with their past... to touch it, see it and to experience the same hills, mountains and valleys their ancestors walked over 170 years ago.

"Riding on bicycles, with support vehicles, and lodging in motels and nice campgrounds paled in comparison to what our ancestors went through," said Cooper. "They were literally forced to round up their belongings, carry their children and help elders walk a

thousand miles into an

unfamiliar land. I know there's no way to ever fully conceive of what it must've been like, but because of this trip those experiences are more powerful to me."

Along the way, the riders visited several historic Cherokee sites, bringing them even closer to their own history. "I learned some things more intimately than I had known before. When you literally stand there on the trail and walk where [our ancestors] walked, it brings a whole new perspective to their suffering. That's something you can't get from books," noted Cooper.

Cooper said it was amazing to see the riders all working in tandem to reach their destination. Many times, he said, the stronger riders would fall back to encourage and motivate those at the end of the pack, just as the stronger individuals must have pushed and even carried the weak during the Removal. Along the route, the team experienced painful injuries, excruciating heat and mental and physical exhaustion. But the camaraderie, friendships and true community the group developed throughout the 22-day journey created a lifelong bond.

"It was interesting to see the range of reactions and responses we got from various people. Some were curious and intrigued by the size of the group, all in matching jerseys riding in a line on a hot summer day," said Cooper. "Some were annoyed at having their day or plans delayed, begrudging that this group they didn't understand inconvenienced them. And some were supportive, receptive and hospitable. I imagine it was similar in some ways back in 1838 as groups of Cherokees passed through these small towns. Perhaps some came to gawk, but offered no aid or empathy because they could not identify or connect in any way. Others probably dehumanized the groups with slang names and cursed them for being there."

"But," Cooper continued, "I believe there must have been good people along the way who were sympathetic and supportive (like so many who hosted us along the way), those who saw the Cherokee not as different but as similar to themselves."

When the group reached their final destination in Tahlequah, they were overwhelmed by emotions, realizing what they had accomplished as a team. Their shared experiences on this trail provided an open window to the past.

"I can't begin to describe what this journey meant to me," said Cooper. "We labored together along the way, and shared mutual tragedy, suffering and celebration. To live and experience the trail in this way was the most amazing thing I've ever done, and it changed my life."

*\*Special thanks to Matthew Yates & Tighe Wachacha of Twin Path Productions for their rich source material and interviews in the award-winning documentary, "Remembering the Removal." More information on their projects capturing the Cherokee culture is available online at [twinpathproductions.com](http://twinpathproductions.com).*





# Simply a Way of Life

*Written by Cyle Augusta Lewis*

“It was a dark page in American History,” said Faren Sanders Crews as she recounted the saddening details of the Trail of Tears, the forced relocation and movement of the Cherokees in 1838. Yet, not one to play the victim, Faren is determined to live a life that spreads light, brightening the world around her.

The Gardner-Webb alumna ('69) is a direct descendant of survivors—on both sides—of the infamous Trail of Tears. Her father, whose ancestors were removed from North Carolina and walked to Indian Territory in northeastern Oklahoma, is a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Her mother, whose family hid in the mountains during the removal, is a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Faren was born in Tahlequah, Okla., the present day capital of the Cherokee Nation, but at age six, her family moved back to her mother's tribal lands on the North Carolina Indian Reservation.

Growing up on the reservation, Faren says, “I didn't feel poor or lacking as a child.” But the absence of modern amenities meant a

steady supply of things we often lack today: an organic lifestyle, simplicity, and time. The abundance of those invaluable resources shaped her growth as a person and an artist.



“We didn't have indoor plumbing—no television or radio—no telephones. Wood was cut, carried, and stored for winter. For entertainment, we played every sport imaginable and when I wasn't outside running and playing, I was indoors drawing. My father, my sister and I drew what we saw outdoors, seeking to capture the images with pen and pencil. That ability is a gift from the Creator.” Faren's artwork is saturated with the details of wildlife and Indian culture, a direct result of her natural surroundings as a child.

Creating always came naturally to Faren, but she remembers the exact moment she realized she had artistic talent. “I remember the other students making posters for school council and such, and they would use stencils and copy pictures, but I created my own freehand. Soon, all the students were asking me to make their posters,” she said with a grin. By the time she'd reached college at Gardner-Webb, and later Western Carolina University and the University of Georgia, friends were offering to pay her to draw original artwork for them. “This is how I earned pocket cash in college,” she says.

Today, four of Faren's paintings are on display at the Harrah's Cherokee Casino Hotel in Cherokee, N.C. She has illustrated cookbooks and children's books, she sits on multiple art councils, she's won competitions, and she participates in many native American art exhibitions and shows. She was chosen as the official artist for the 60th Anniversary of *Unto These Hills*, the second longest running outdoor drama in the United States (Faren performed in the drama for eight years as a child and teenager, eventually achieving the roll of Nundayeli, daughter of the hero). Her art was included in the book *Generations, The Cherokee Language in Art*, and in the 2011 “Trail of Tears Art Show” in Oklahoma. She was even a Cherokee consultant on fellow Gardner-Webb alumnus Bruce Bowers' acclaimed documentary *The Blue Ridge Parkway: A Long and Winding Road*.

But art is just one way that Faren colors the world and the relationships around her. “Our lives are meant to touch people,” she said, painting an image of the golden rule. There is a Cherokee word Faren often cites: “Gadugi,” which means, “working or coming together.” She explains that the measure of influence or power in Native American culture is not how much you have. Instead, it's “how much you give away that elevates the heart with a sense of power. We are not here for ourselves, we are here to interact and influence others.” Her church family taught her this lesson as a child by traveling together on Sundays to provide whatever help they could to families facing hardships.

Even to this day, Faren considers such random acts of service and kindness to be a simple way of life, engrained in her as a tribal characteristic. In her home county in Georgia, she has been a pillar of civic and philanthropic leadership for nearly four decades. She has organized food drives and worked with a walkway development project. She gives countless talks about Cherokee culture to Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, schools, churches, rotary clubs, and women's groups. “I get really popular around Thanksgiving, especially among my teacher friends,” she laughs. “I have to remind them I'm an Indian all year round!” She has even co-founded a junior service league, sharing with future generations her life's guiding principles: never miss an opportunity to be kind, and give of yourself.

Historically, even when a culture is destroyed, its art often remains, carrying with it for future generations the vestiges of that culture's history and its values. In the same way, Faren is herself a living memorial to her culture's heritage of generosity, selflessness, and service.



Crews when she was named Miss Cherokee

But, she would quickly remind us, as dark as the Trail of Tears was, the Cherokee culture was not destroyed. It lives perpetually in its people and in its principles, none more important than “Gadugi.” “I come from a living culture,” Faren says, “with our own language and tradition, and a rich history. But it's not about what you have that makes you rich. It's about what you give away. Therein lies the true wealth.”

*\*Article courtesy of Wayne County Magazine.*



# Culture

## Shock

THOUGHTS ON A THIRD CULTURE LIFE

WRITTEN BY SARA JOLLEY

Miles of luscious greenery and endless sky, crystal blue water and white sand beaches, the smell of tropical fruit and fresh fish, neighbors chatting outside cement houses. Everything is simple. No modernizations or technologies enhance the raw natural beauty—the landscape, the food, the people.

For most of us, that sounds like a travel brochure, an advertisement for a week in paradise. But for GWU photojournalism major Jessica Hibbard and art education major Elisa Beekman—both Americans—it's home.

Hibbard, 19, was born in Indonesia and moved to the Philippines when she was two months old, where she would spend her entire childhood. Beekman, 21, was born in the exact house she would spend 19 years of her life in Papua, Indonesia. These students are "third culture kids," a term used to describe American kids who have recently moved stateside after spending their childhood overseas.

But the term's multicultural ring might hide the challenge of a "third culture" life. "We are not of our parents' culture, and we are not of the culture we grew up in. We're stuck in-between," stated Hibbard.

At the core of the third culture existence is a paradoxical sense of being both within and without, a part of a culture but also somehow separate or different.



Elisa Beekman with her artwork.

racism that constituted the shock. During several furloughs, Beekman was faced with new social rules based on skin color that she didn't understand. Why would people treat each other so cruelly in the grocery store or the post office? Why would a black elementary school girl not want to come to my birthday party? These were strange conventions that she couldn't penetrate. "I remember thinking that I wanted dark-skinned people around me. I didn't understand the frustration between light and dark."

Because of the difficulty of the adjustment, Hibbard and Beekman—both now full of compassion and love for those around them—admit to initially harboring some serious bitterness toward America.

"I remember on standardized tests, I would mark that I was Asian, because I refused to claim America," Hibbard said. "That's not me, I am more Asian than I am white." Likewise, on furlough, Beekman admits, "I would not stand up during the pledge of allegiance. I was just so bitter."

The girls insist, though, that their Gardner-Webb experience has opened their eyes. "The quality of people here, professors and students have more of a tolerance for other cultures, and a willingness to listen," said Hibbard. They agree that their professors genuinely care about them and are curious about their upbringing. "That just wouldn't happen at a large school," reasoned Beekman. The small size has helped the two community-oriented "missionary kids" settle into college life.

Professors have also given them terms and concepts, like "third culture" and "reverse culture shock," to make better sense of their frustrations. They've helped the girls cultivate compassion toward those people who don't—and perhaps can't—understand them. "People are like sponges," says Beekman. "They have no frame of reference for life in another country, and they can only soak up so much. That's not their fault. But we have so much more to give them."

Hibbard and Beekman both have an intense passion for missions, yet their passion is not exclusive to foreign countries. Both would love to in some way incorporate their majors with international missions. But after living in America permanently they both realize the need in the States as well.

"God has given me a calling of helping connect great ministries overseas to American churches. I felt like GWU was a place I could become even more grounded in my faith and grow exponentially," stated Hibbard. Beekman's prayer for her future is the same: "Lord, use me anywhere I am."

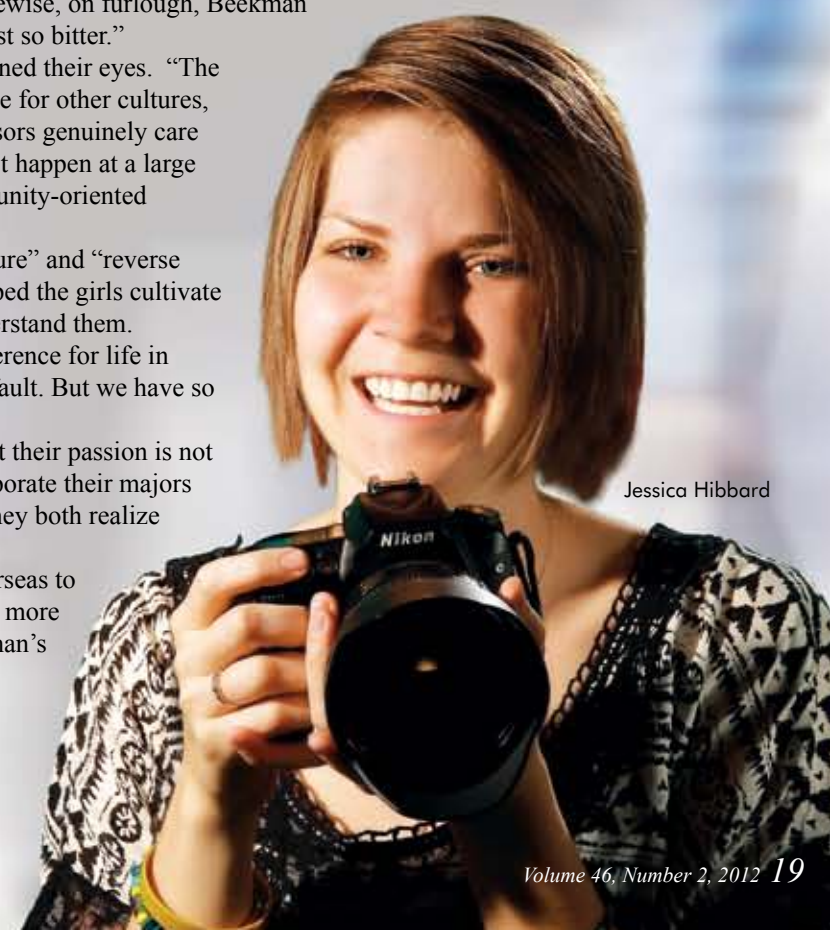
For Hibbard, a Protestant, the portraits of Mary and Jesus in her Catholic friends' homes in the Philippines reminded her that she was different. For Beekman, the realization was triggered by something as simple as a Barbie toy.

"I remember one time, I was playing Barbies with a little girl on our front porch and I had a Barbie vacuum cleaner." When the little girl asked, "What is this?" Beekman had no idea how to explain it. "I was obviously different."

Both Beekman and Hibbard have also experienced another common aspect of third-culture life: reverse culture shock. Most Americans assume that it should be easy for missionary kids to adjust when they return to the U.S. After all, they're Americans. They speak English. They don't look like strangers from a foreign land. So where's the challenge?

The challenge can lie in something as simple as the pace of American life. "In the Philippines, no one is ever really in a hurry," said Hibbard, laughing. "Everything just runs a few minutes behind all the time, and that's just normal."

For Beekman, it was the brutality of American



Jessica Hibbard



# “Oh, What A Smile”

*Gardner-Webb Mourns the Loss of Ariane Patterson*

*Written by Paul Foster*

“That smile, that infectious smile.” In the days following Gardner-Webb student Ariane Patterson’s sudden and unexpected death, it was her smile that person after person constantly mentioned. Ariane passed away on January 17, her 21st birthday, while attending her “Life and Letters of Paul” class at the Boiling Springs campus. An autopsy later revealed that she suffered a heart attack due to systemic lupus erythematosus, a disease she’d been battling since the age of nine. Just that morning, she had tweeted, “Thank you God for another year of life.”

After her death, an unshakeable sadness descended on the hearts of Ariane’s family, friends and Gardner-Webb classmates. But the memory of her smile seemed to propel them forward. Friends flooded social media sites with stories of Ariane’s goodness and light, many of them referencing the Godly spirit that shined through her. News of the tragedy even showed up in media outlets from New York to Australia.

Ariane’s funeral service at the New Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church in Forest City, N.C., was so packed that many had to stand along the walls of the sanctuary. But far from a mournful dirge, the funeral was like an anthem, an uplifting celebration of Ariane’s life.

At the service, a group of Ariane’s friends from Gardner-Webb delivered a poem they wrote about her entitled “A Friend.” “We all felt we needed to speak about what kind of person Ariane was,” said Summer Baliles, a Psychology major with a minor in Discipleship Studies, from Belmont. N.C. “She was an awesome friend and would have gone to the end of the world to make sure we were happy. We wanted everyone to understand how she made us feel. We were blessed to have her as a part of our lives.” Each friend in the group took a turn reading a sentence of the poem. The opening line read, “A friend is someone who brings out the best in you.”

Through the funeral, those who didn’t know Ariane learned that her life was about serving Christ. That included serving in her home church, Well Springs United Methodist of Forest City, where she was a certified lay speaker, youth leader, usher, and a member of the youth and ensemble choirs. She also wrote and sang her own spiritual songs and was heavily involved with campus ministries at GWU.

“She celebrated every day with a big smile,” said Dr. Alfonzo Everett, pastor of Wells Spring United Methodist Church. “She was loved by her church and her community. She desired to go into the ministry and I knew she would do well.”

Also speaking at the service was Reverend Cedric Wilkerson, former pastor of Wells Springs, a family friend and Ariane’s Godfather. “We rejoice in her memory. When I think of Ariane, I think of a sweet spirit. She courageously fought the disease that was a part of her life and never complained about it.”

Most of all, Ariane will be remembered as a positive influence on those around her. Baliles said, “She was a true disciple of Christ and it was evident in our friendship and in her everyday life. She is still making a difference in us all. Even though she may not be physically here, Ariane’s laugh is still engraved in my mind. There was never a time when she wasn’t smiling.”



# No Sight, No Sound, No Problem

*Written by Travis Sherill and Matt Walters*

From our earliest moments, humans speak a sophisticated language of touch. As children, patterns of tactile understanding are woven through our emotional and psychological DNA, so that even as adults, a hug, a shove, a reassuring shoulder squeeze or a kiss can unlock worlds of meaning that words and gestures simply can’t touch.

But what if touch was all you had? What if you were forced, in a world of silent blurs, to finger and feel your way to love, to truth—to class in the morning?

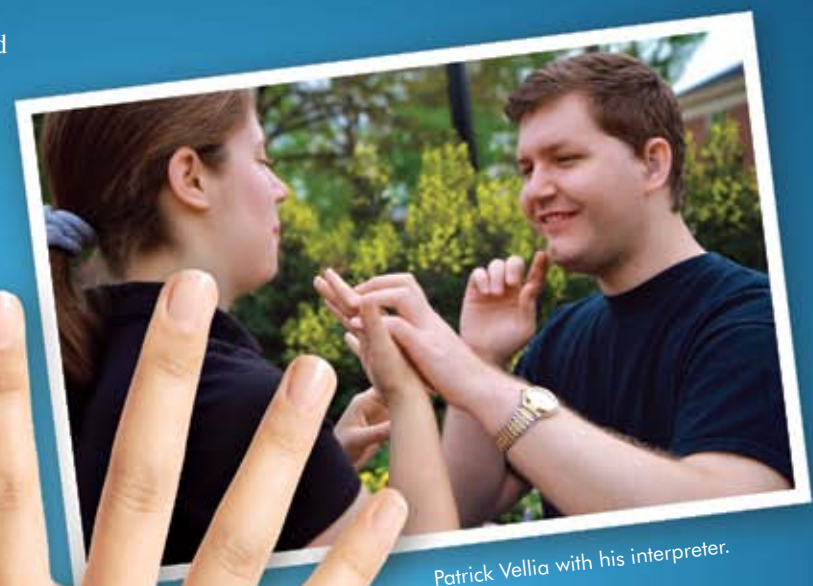
Meet Patrick Vellia, a sophomore at Gardner-Webb University. After losing his vision at six months old, Vellia was diagnosed as deafblind at the age of four, and has been feeling his way forward ever since.

But he doesn’t let a little thing like deafblindness get in the way of anything. “It was a challenge in some cases,” Vellia says of his disability, “but I am a creative man and I’ve found ways to get around my obstacles.”

Creative indeed. In his free time, Vellia enjoys white water rafting, swimming, tandem biking and yoga. As a high-schooler in Long Island, N.Y., he studied self-defense mechanisms, and by his high school graduation, he had earned his black belt. He is an active leader in the North Carolina Deafblind Association and a former Helen Keller Institute participant. He has even given lectures to school leaders on deafblind education and accommodative technology.

His creativity is best displayed in the classroom where, with the help of GWU’s Noel Program for Students with Disabilities, Vellia utilizes a variety of adaptive technologies and resources to succeed. His best resources, though, are the Noel Program’s interpreters, who attend every class with Vellia and transform his hands into eyes and ears.

They use a technique called tactile interpreting, where Vellia places his hands on the hands of an interpreter in order to feel what the interpreter signs. According to Stephanie Oliver, one of the interpreters, tactile interpreting is challenging because “you are working in a much smaller area than normal interpreting.” Tactile interpreting also involves more signs than normal American Sign Language, since the language has to communicate tones and clues that sighted individuals usually see in the interpreter’s facial expressions or body language.



Patrick Vellia with his interpreter.

“If someone is excited, I’ll move my hand in a certain way in order to communicate not only what they’re saying but that they’re excited,” Oliver says. An expert in tactile communication, Vellia is able to follow along without missing a beat, occasionally even voicing responses to professors’ questions (Vellia has retained the ability to audibly articulate).

That’s not to say there still aren’t challenges. A few last-minute cafeteria menu changes have slipped past his notice, he says with a laugh, leading him to try a few foods he wouldn’t have otherwise eaten.

And while Vellia is an expert in the language of touch, communicating in other languages is difficult. “I can’t just pick up the phone and call someone, or talk to someone on just any computer without modifications,” he says. A social person himself, Vellia says people often don’t approach him to talk because they are unsure how to begin a conversation with him. “But that shouldn’t stop them,” he says. Vellia can easily communicate through his interpreter, and when no interpreter is around, friends can write messages that he can read through his modified iPad.

The key, he says is creativity, and a commitment to persevere and endure no matter what sort of obstacle presents itself. “The one thing I would tell people who are deafblind, or who are struggling with adversity, would be what I’ve been telling myself all my life,” he says. “Don’t give up.”



# MAN ON FIRE

WRITTEN BY MATT WALTERS

By his own admission, Gardner-Webb alumnus Justin Swatzell '09 is an East Tennessee "good old boy." As he tells it, shooting shotguns, fishing, four-wheeling—and, apparently, playing with fireworks and small explosives—was just part of growing up in East Tennessee.

"I never blew up mailboxes or anything, but I was always into something ridiculous," he says, chuckling. "It's just what I do; I participate in risky behavior."

"Risky" is one way to say it. Another is to say that characters like "Swatz" and his cousin, Bronson, are the reason dozens of states have outlawed amateur fireworks. As teenagers, they would shoot bottle rockets at one another, eventually upgrading their arms to homemade PVC-pipe mortar shell launchers. Swatzell remembers twisting together the fuses of two—and then three, four, five—mortar shell fireworks in the same tube, and scrambling frantically away as they burst only feet above his head. Naïve and invincible, Swatzell admits that they flirted repeatedly with disaster, their near misses only fueling their "boys will be boys" bravado. Until Christmas Eve 2006.

Ironically, the risk that nearly killed Justin Swatzell was, by comparison, barely even "risky." The cousins were in an old pick-up truck, driving through a field toward their grandfather's pond to fish, shoot skeet and, of course, set off fireworks. Swatzell, riding in the passenger seat, was holding a box of about two-dozen mortar shell fireworks, each the size of a hacky sack. Rolling down the window, he lit a shell and threw it, laughing as it exploded in the field alongside the truck.

"This is where I get a little foggy," Swatzell says. "I guess the fuse from that mortar shell sparked the rest of them, and I just remember hearing this hiss, like dozens of fuses had lit at the same time, and then the truck filled with smoke." His grandfather and uncle, who watched the accident in their

rearview mirror, would later say they thought a bomb had exploded in Bronson's Nissan. Bronson had thrown the truck in park and jumped out as soon as he heard the fuses, but Swatzell says he just froze. "You know, for some reason I just couldn't move. All I could do was scream for Bronson to get out of the truck. The next thing I know, they're going off."

For the next 30 seconds, the truck cab was transformed into a furnace. Doctors told Swatzell that temperatures probably reached 1,200 degrees. "By the end of it, all the glass from the windshield, all the plastic on the dash, the cloth and plastic in the seats, even the polyurethane on our shotguns was completely melted." When it was finished, Swatzell stumbled from the truck, muttering the only words that occurred to him: "that was awesome." The skin on his hands, arms, and thighs—and life as he previously knew it—had been incinerated.



Swatzell's grandfather rushed him to the hospital, where he staggered into the emergency room holding his charred hands in front

of him. "They call it de-gloving, what happened to my hands. You can think of it like a banana being peeled. Looking back, it's hard to even imagine the pain. That emergency room just had no idea what to do with me when I came in."

Working to stabilize Swatzell, they decided they would have to induce a coma and airlift him to Chattanooga's Erlanger Hospital Burn Unit. His friends and family were devastated; Swatzell was growing concerned. "Until they mentioned the coma, I had been cracking jokes. I was hurting, but I had no frame of reference for what type of danger I was in," he says. "I thought they'd do some surgery, fix me up and I'd heal. I had no idea those type of burns were so fatal." What the doctors hadn't told him was that at 19 years old and with 19% of his body covered in third degree burns, his chances of

survival were 62%, a smidge better than a coin flip.

What followed was a two-week drug-induced stupor at Erlanger, where one of the country's most talented graft surgeons built Swatzell new hands. Then after two more weeks of solid morphine, he came off IV painkillers and was transferred to a normal room, and then a therapy center in Knoxville where his atrophied muscles needed time to strengthen. He was told it would take four more weeks to regain enough movement to go home. Four days later, Swatzell jogged out of the therapy center.

"I don't know what motivated me so powerfully," he says. "I was just so ready to get home."

But he left with a new *spark*. Swatzell had long felt a call to ministry, but until his time at Erlanger he didn't have a specific plan for his future. "I remember having a chaplain, who would come by during moments of intense loneliness. Sometimes he'd encourage me. Other times, he'd just pray with me. That made a huge difference. I remember thinking, 'If I get out of here alive, I could do that.'"

After spending the spring semester recuperating, Swatzell returned to a community college and then transferred back to Gardner-Webb, where he graduated in 2009 before marrying his college sweetheart, GWU alumna Kara Davenport Swatzell ('09). He is currently enrolled in Gardner-Webb's Divinity School, earning a degree in pastoral care and counseling, and with plans to pursue expertise in bioethics.

"Somehow, this whole experience has given me a new perspective, helped me to figure out my place," he says. "My accident happened because I was being stupid, and I was punished heavily for it. But there are children in war-torn countries who are intentionally burned for doing absolutely nothing at all. There are people who have it much worse."

No one plans for disaster, Swatzell says. No one expects an accident, or a sudden sickness, or devastating loss. "But when those things happen, if I can use this experience to help other people get back on a path to healing, then that's what I want to do."



# A QUEST FOR RACIAL RECONCILIATION

*Written by Matt Walters*

Gardner-Webb University devotes a Dimensions program each year to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy of love and reconciliation. In 2012, the University honored that legacy by inviting Carolyn McKinstry, a native of Birmingham, Ala., and a veteran of that city's tumultuous 1960s Civil Rights movement, to share her testimony with the Gardner-Webb student body.

A lifelong member of Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, McKinstry was present on Sept. 15, 1963, when white racists bombed the Church, killing four of her friends. She later survived another house bombing in her neighborhood, and says she can still hear the terrified screams of the woman in the street, wailing as she watched her house burn.

But despite the fear and uncertainty of her childhood, McKinstry also found herself on the very cusp of a movement that would rattle the racist strongholds of the South and reclaim the spirit of freedom on which the entire nation was built.

"I just happened to be at church the night that Dr. King and five other reverends and Civil Rights leaders led their first mass rally at Sixteenth Street in 1963," she remembered. "I had never experienced someone telling us, especially us young people, that we could make a difference."

The next day, McKinstry was among the thousands of students hosed by firemen as they marched peacefully. But rather than give herself over to the fear and anger that threatened to consume her, the placard she carried has continued to define her life's ministry even to this day.

"My sign asked a simple question, based on the passage in 1 John 4. Can a man love God and hate his brother?" McKinstry said. "We have to reconcile ourselves to God, by assuring that nothing in our lives runs contrary to his Word. By doing that, we can begin to hope for true reconciliation with one another. That's how we can achieve that beloved community that Dr. King preached so passionately about."

Shortly after McKinstry's visit, an interracial group of dozens of GWU Divinity students and professors took up her challenge by participating in a conversation geared toward achieving racial reconciliation in the church. The event was sponsored by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina's (CBFNC) Racial Reconciliation Ministry Team and the School of Divinity Student Association (SDSA).

In an attempt to address what one student called "the residue of racial tension that still lingers," the students and professors shared painful memories of racist bitterness inside and outside the church. They struggled to define terms like "racism" and "hatred" and "equality." They even questioned whether their task might better be called "conciliation" than "reconciliation," since they were uncertain whether true community between the races has ever existed.

But they also talked a lot about hope—for mutual understanding, for admiration of one another, for the wounds of the past to be finally laid to rest, and for the realization of true unity as the church of Christ.

As one participant said, her hands extended in a gesture of supplication, "Maybe we can't change our entire community, or our church, or even our own families. But I can decide, for myself, to begin taking a real interest in those who are different from me."

"True change is never corporate. It's got to start with individuals," she said to a man of a different race. "People like you and me."

## AT TERRIFYING

**GWU Football Team Offers Disaster Relief After Tornado**

## TOUCHDOWN

*Written by Paul Foster*

Tornado watches or even warnings are not uncommon in our region, especially given the prevalence of warm-weather thunderstorms in the spring and summer months. But it's rare, indeed, for a tornado to touch down in the winter, as one did in Rutherford County, N.C., on Jan. 11, 2012.

While there were thankfully no fatalities, 10 people were injured by the terrifying twister (an EF2, "significant tornado," on the National Weather Service scale) as winds reached 115 miles per hour, demolishing numerous homes and tossing debris miles from its original locations.

After the storm, dozens of local families needed help putting their lives back together. The Cliffside, N.C., and Ellenboro, N.C., fire departments issued a call for volunteer relief workers, and the Gardner-Webb University football team responded. Coaches and players alike reported for duty, clearing and disposing of debris, picking up everything from food and clothing, planks of siding, sofas, and even toilets that had been torn and tossed from their houses.



Best of all, the team helped the victims begin to reclaim some semblance of order. "I've been around tornadoes before," said GWU Head Football Coach Ron Dickerson, an Oklahoma native. "I know their devastation. This experience really woke up our players and I'm glad they had this opportunity."

One of those players was Maurice Dickson, a sophomore defensive lineman and sociology major, from Hillside, N.J. "The destruction I witnessed was an image that will stick with me forever. I saw a home that was destroyed, and the roof of that home some 50 yards from its foundation," said Dickson.

Dickson mentioned one family in particular whose five children lost almost everything. "This made me realize how blessed I was to be able to help the victims because they weren't mentally able to help themselves," said Dickson.

"Coming from where I am and seeing something like this for the first time opened my eyes. I thanked God that I could help. It was the best feeling," said Dickson.

Just days after participating in the disaster clean up efforts, Dickerson was heartened by a thank you email he received. Drew Brown, fire chief for the Cliffside Fire Department, wrote, "I know the victims appreciate everything you guys did. It is great to know that there are people out there, like you and your team, who were willing to offer a helping hand to a complete stranger in their time of need."

Of course, the tornado relief is just one of the many community outreach projects the team has been involved with. Most recently, they were a part of a fundraiser that raised more than \$20,000 for a local middle school student's battle against cancer.

"The tornado relief was a wonderful way to give back to our community," said Dickerson. "Even more than playing great football, being great citizens and serving others is what we want our guys to be about."



# Digging for Excellence

Written by Jeanie Groh

Balance. Passion. Excellence. Success. These are just a few words that describe Evan Moffitt, a 2012 graduate of Gardner-Webb University and this year's Big South Conference's Volleyball Scholar-Athlete of the Year. This honor is awarded to one male and one female each year in each Big South Conference sport for outstanding achievement in the classroom and in the field of play.

Moffitt, who maintained a cumulative 3.83 grade point average, said that maintaining the balance required to succeed both in the classroom and on the court isn't easy. "[It] has come from experience – both success and failure – and wisdom and advice from those who have been exposed to the same situation I have as a student-athlete."

Moffitt says the fast pace and energy of volleyball, and the bond with her teammates, also drives her to succeed. "I love being able to celebrate with my teammates each point, each accomplishment, no matter how big or small."

Even with her success, Moffitt says her perception of excellence is continuously developing. "Excellence is a word I used to see as synonymous with perfection. Yet, this past volleyball season I learned a profound lesson: perfection is something that none of us can accomplish here on earth, but excellence is giving my best, which is what I have always striven for in every aspect of my life."

This is not the first time Moffitt has been recognized by the Big South Conference—she has earned a spot on the All-Academic Team for the past three years. Her favorite accomplishment, though, is having the chance to "bond with each girl uniquely as not only teammates, but hopefully lifelong friends. That's what I cherish the most," Moffitt said.

Evan Moffitt is a prime example of the high-caliber student and athlete that Gardner-Webb University seeks to develop. Her success is fueled by the motivation she finds in her faith. "I have been taught and motivated to give my best in all that I do as though I was doing it for the Lord. He is my motivation in my entire being, both on and off the court."

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more information.



# The Class of the Conference

*Two Gardner-Webb Grads Earn Big South Scholastic Awards During their Senior Seasons*

Each year, the Big South Conference celebrates scholastic achievement by awarding its prestigious George A. Christenberry Awards for Academic Excellence to the student-athletes who maintain the highest grade point average (GPA) during their college careers. Coming into 2012, a Gardner-Webb athlete had earned the award for two consecutive years. This May, Jane Savage (softball) and Josh Padgett (men's track and field) made it three.

Both Savage (Marietta, Ga.) and Padgett (Forest City, N.C.) graduated from Gardner-Webb in May 2012. Savage maintained a perfect 4.00 GPA while earning her Bachelor of Arts in English. She is a two-time Big South All-Academic Team member, and a three-time Big South Presidential Honor Roll member. Padgett earned his Bachelor of Science in Mathematics with a 3.99 GPA, and was a three-time Big South Presidential Honor Roll member.

"The Christenberry Award is the highest academic honor awarded to Big South student-athletes," said Big South Conference Commissioner Kyle B. Kallander.

"We congratulate [the winners] for their accomplishments in the classroom and on the field of play. Their careers truly exemplify the highest ideals of the Big South Conference."

But Savage wasn't finished there.

Days later, the Conference announced that Savage was named the 2012 Softball Scholar Athlete of the Year for her impressive combined athletic and academic performance in her senior year. Then during the Spring 2012 commencement, Savage was one of three students to earn the Senior Scholastic Award for maintaining the highest GPA in her graduating class.

Savage says the drive to excel academically has characterized her entire college career. Having completed a rigorous international baccalaureate program in high school, she arrived at Gardner-Webb having already honed the time-management and study skills that so many students, at first, struggle to grasp. Still, she says, learning to excel for the right reasons has made all the difference.

"It's been a really interesting journey for me, spiritually and otherwise, as I've come to understand why academic excellence is so important to me," said Savage. Rather than basing her self-worth on whether she excels in the classroom, as she once did, Savage's sense of meaning and her source of inspiration now springs from her confidence in her spiritual identity. "Now, I think since God gave me the gifts to enjoy writing and reading, I should do those things to the best of my ability."

Savage hopes to pursue opportunities as a freelance writer in her early days as a college graduate, perhaps even following her English professors' encouragement to pursue faith writing. "I can't say enough about the English department here," she says, beaming. "They have always supported me, and I've gained incredible knowledge and experience from their teaching and from getting to know them as people."

The most meaningful part of her Gardner-Webb experience, though, has been her journey toward the Gospel. "I wasn't a Christian when I came to Gardner-Webb," she says, "so this was a perfect environment to make me vulnerable to hear the Gospel and respond to it. I'll always be thankful for that."



Jane Savage



Josh Padgett

## No Guts. No Glory.

*Written by Paul Foster*

Cindy Boomhower's career as GWU softball pitcher finished up the way you'd probably expect if you remember the brimming promise that surrounded her outstanding freshman campaign. As a red-shirt senior this year (Boomhower graduated in Dec. 2011 with a degree in elementary education and is currently working toward her M.B.A), Boomhower entered the season in the top five of the University's Division I record books in wins, saves, complete games, innings pitched, strikeouts, shutouts, earned run average, and fewest walks per seven innings pitched.

Then on March 9, 2012, Boomhower put the exclamation point on her outstanding career by baffling UNC-Wilmington hitters en route to a perfect game, one of sports' most singular feats.

But what fans need not forget is the extreme adversity and grueling pain Boomhower endured in between the bookends of her career, pain so severe it made her question more than just her future in softball.

After six sophomore starts in 2009, Boomhower started experiencing terrible back pain that eventually became unbearable. "It was the simple things, like reaching for something, that became difficult, and I had bad headaches," said Boomhower. Doctors diagnosed her with a herniated disk and conducted surgery around Easter of 2009. Unfortunately, though, the surgery led to further spinal complications, and two weeks later Boomhower was on the operating table for the second time.

"Before the surgeries, I was afraid I wouldn't return to normal. However, my doctor was adamant that I keep going and stay strong. Over time I developed a better attitude than before surgery," said Boomhower.

Boomhower also got support from her GWU softball teammates and Head Coach Tom Cole. "They were always there," she said. "They helped me catch up on my class work, brought me food, and most important, they prayed."

Cole wanted to make sure Boomhower knew that they were concerned about her as a person first, and that softball was secondary. "We supported her beyond the sport. Our team is a very close group and we all urged Cindy to be careful and make her recovery a gradual process," said Cole.

Once Boomhower was ready to pick up the softball again, Cole says they kept it slow—slower than she probably wanted. "We were very careful with what we asked of Cindy," Cole said. "We watched closely the number of innings she pitched. But her performances were outstanding."

Boomhower's success as an upperclassman was all the more impressive, considering that the surgery forced her to alter her mechanics. "I don't know that I threw later in my career like I once did. It was like learning all over again and changing my technique. It went well, though, thanks to my coaches."

Boomhower insists she is thankful that she had such a supportive group of teammates and coaches around her through the ordeal. She believes the institutional DNA of Gardner-Webb had something to do with that. "The school's Christian aspect has had a big impact," she said. "People I've met here will be lifelong friends."





# D<sup>AW</sup>GGED

## Determination

By Courtney Finocchiaro

How many of us would invest our hearts, energies and wallets into something, knowing that we would only enjoy it for a short time before having to give it up? Surely, Gardner-Webb's Godbold School of Business professors, experts at teaching students how to maximize long-term gain, would label this a bad investment. By those standards, Chelsea Usher, who graduated in May with her bachelor's in English, made a "bad investment."

Usher came to Gardner-Webb with a dream—to combine her love for animals and her passion for Christian service by training a Leader Dog for the Blind. "I wanted to be a part of providing someone's independence," said Usher. What's more, knowing that there would be a waiting list process with the Leader Dog organization, she wanted to begin immediately.

Gardner-Webb has a strict "no pets" policy, though, and University officials were, at first, a little reluctant to embrace Usher's dream of training a puppy on campus. "Looking back, the school didn't know me as a freshman," says Usher, named the University's Most Outstanding Female Graduate in 2012. "I hadn't proven myself. For all they knew, I could have been recklessly irresponsible. I needed to grow up, and to be patient with God's timing. I wasn't responsible enough as a freshman or sophomore, and He knew that."

After all, it was a significant request. Training a Leader Dog isn't like keeping a pet—it's like raising a child. The dog must accompany its trainer at all times, learning to behave during all social circumstances. This would mean going to class, eating in the cafeteria, living in a residence hall, attending school functions, even accompanying Usher on school trips—a significant investment indeed.

In all, it took two years before Usher secured University permission to bring a puppy onto campus. The day GWU President Dr. Frank Bonner informed her that her request had been finally approved, she says, "If I had not been glued to my chair I probably would have hugged him!" After another year on the Leader

Dog waiting list, Chelsea and a beautiful golden Labrador puppy, Tucker, arrived on campus to start classes in August.

As you might expect, Tucker quickly won the University's hearts, strutting around campus with Usher attached by a leash. He was embraced as a Decker resident, even receiving his own nametag outside his Residence Hall door. Tucker's presence was even therapeutic for animal lovers around campus. After all, the chance to occasionally pet or play with a puppy—when he's off duty, of course—is a great stress reliever. When student Ariane Patterson passed away this spring, Tucker offered his own unique brand of puppy therapy, passing out smiles and free cuddling sessions for his friends who were hurting.

Still, despite Tucker's impressive record of obedience, he sometimes behaved like a puppy. Once, for example, puppy sitter and Associate Professor of Biology, Dr. Stefka Eddins, left her door open. Seeing his opportunity, Tucker bolted to the nearest classroom, which was of course in session. An intense game of tag then ensued between Eddins and Tucker, much to the students' delight.

Usher is the first to admit that, even though it was her responsibility to train Tucker, the puppy ended up doing more teaching than learning. For example, he taught Usher—a self-diagnosed perfectionist who won the Senior Scholastic Award for maintaining a perfect 4.0 cumulative grade point average—not to take things so seriously. After all, sometimes puppies decide to go to the

bathroom in the middle of Target, and there's nothing you can do about it. "This has certainly been a lesson in patience. Puppies don't really allow you to be a perfectionist."

Tucker has also taught the greater University about the importance of Leader Dogs, and about how to interact with them—a timely lesson, since Gardner-Webb will welcome its first blind student and Leader Dog team in the fall.

Usher says the time, money, and hours of work it takes to prepare Tucker for a lifetime of service was quite the tedious process. "There is so much work that goes into service dogs. Business owners, for example, expect service dogs to be perfect when they visit. But they're dogs, and they deal with all the same distractions and excitements as normal puppies. It takes a lot of work to get them there."

What kept her going was the knowledge of what Tucker will be worth, not just financially (Leader Dogs are worth \$40,000), but in terms of the value he'll add to a person's quality of life. As a Leader Dog, Tucker will be able to warn his handler when danger arises, move his handler around troublesome objects, navigate busy streets and tricky trails—he'll be a person's eyes.

Of course, Usher won't see any of that "profit" in her own pocket. Nor will the thousands of Gardner-Webb friends who invested in Tucker throughout this academic year. What's more, she'll endure the heart-wrenching experience of giving Tucker away. A bad financial investment? Maybe. A selfless one? Absolutely. *Pro Deo et Humanitate (et Canine).*



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
*Nearly 14,000 Leader Dogs  
have been placed with a  
person who is blind or  
visually impaired.*





# CAPITAL ACHIEVEMENT

Written by Matt Renfer

*For many college graduates, the step off the commencement podium is a step into an uncertain future. But for Gardner-Webb alumna Annalisa Musarra ('12), who graduated this May with a degree in communication studies, that step was a little less daunting. That's because during her final semester, Musarra was baptized into the "real world" through a challenging and prestigious internship with the Religion News Service (RNS), an interfaith wire service in Washington D.C. Covering mostly Christian news, Musarra contributed numerous press releases and feature articles, several of which were picked up by The Washington Post, all while taking classes at the Washington Journalism Center. The Gardner-Webb Magazine had a chance to catch up with her during the internship, and the following are excerpts from that conversation.*

**GW:** *What are your responsibilities at RNS, and what are some of the fun opportunities the internship has afforded you?*

**Annalisa:** When I'm assigned a story, I usually start by attending an event or calling for interviews. I then write anywhere from 250-word briefs to 700-word articles, depending on the story. After I write, my story goes through the editing process, onto the RNS website, and out to the wire to get picked up. So far, I've been to press conferences at the Capitol, events in the National Press Club, movie screenings, and I've had the chance to talk to many people I never thought I would ever talk to.

**GW:** *How has Gardner-Webb prepared you for the challenges of your work environment in D.C.?*

**Annalisa:** It's the little things that stand out that have helped me at work—things like turning in a story on a deadline. Things I learned working in the Admissions Office, like meeting new people, making connections and keeping important documents organized all come back to me as I go out and talk to people and balance three or four stories at a time. I'm glad I've taken a variety of classes at GWU, especially in the Communication Studies Department, because they've prepared me for my classes at the Washington Journalism Center. It's funny that I, and so many students, think that what we learn in class may never help in real life, but I've found that's not true at all! Even the little things like editing photos or using Excel have helped me in the work force.

**GW:** *You have a very strong Christian faith. How has that enriched your experience at RNS?*

**Annalisa:** We talk a lot about how to be the best Christians in a work environment. GWU has definitely strengthened my faith, which prepared me for coming here. I take classes all day on Monday and Friday, plus an online class at GWU, I work Tuesday through Thursday, and I volunteer here, so it's been important for me to have a strong faith to keep me going when things are stressful. I've also had so much support from friends at Gardner-Webb that I still feel connected to campus, and that keeps me going here, too.

**GW:** *What has the internship taught you so far—professionally and personally?*

**Annalisa:** My time at RNS—and really in D.C. as a whole—has taught me a lot about connecting with people. It's important here to keep personal relationships because you never know what might lead you to a story or a job. I've also learned a lot about how important the news really is—D.C. does not mess around with this! If you don't know what's going on, you're out of the loop. I've

learned how to be a grown-up here, too. This is real life. I learn every day to put on that adult attitude and do the work. Work isn't always fun, but I keep reminding myself how blessed I am to have this opportunity. I'm also learning more each day about the world of journalism. I didn't know much about the field before coming here, but I'm learning how to deal with editors and how to grow thicker skin when it comes to the hard truth!

**GW:** *So, from Boiling Springs to Washington D.C. Have you felt a little culture shock?*

**Annalisa:** Washington is definitely not Boiling Springs! For one, we can't have a car here, so you can go wherever your legs will take you. After four months here, I don't think I'll remember how to even drive my car! And I thought the construction noises from building the new Tucker Student Center were hard to listen to, but now I fall asleep and wake up to sirens, garbage trucks, people yelling and constant traffic all the time! But I love being on my own in a city. I was never bored in Boiling Springs, but I certainly could never be bored here. When I do have free afternoons, I like to walk down to the free museums and monuments, something you can't get anywhere else. It would definitely be hard to leave!

**GW:** *What are your future plans, and how might this internship experience shape them?*

**Annalisa:** The internship has been extremely helpful, because it's opened the door for several offers for summer internships. I've actually just accepted a paid internship at the General Services Administration (GSA) in D.C.! I hope to either be hired by them at the end of the internship, or to look for other jobs in Washington. I'd really like to stay here and start my career. I don't know where this will take me, but I know God will provide because He has thus far.







# Class Acts

## The 1950s

### ALUMNA PASSING

#### **RAMONA HOYLE '50 A.A.**

died Dec. 11, 2011. She taught English for 30 years for Lincoln County Schools. Upon her retirement in 1989, Mrs. Hoyle spent a year in China as a missionary teaching English. She was a member of First Baptist Church in Maiden where she served as GA (Girls in Action) leader and a Sunday School teacher. Hoyle was active in the American Legion Auxiliary and Women's Day of Prayer. She is survived by her son, two grandchildren, one brother and sister.

### ALUMNUS PASSING

#### **JOE "DAN" WASHBURN '50 A.A.**

worked for N.C. State with Corp Science. He later began a career in landscaping. He founded Tar Heel Landscape Enterprises, Inc. He was a member of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Creedmore, N.C. He is survived by his wife, son, daughter and three grandchildren, as well as his sister, brother, and several nieces and nephews.

### ALUMNUS PASSING

#### **HENRY L. SMITH '53**

passed away on Feb. 4, 2012. He was a Navy veteran. Throughout a successful career in education, he served as teacher, coach, and teammate as well as a supervisor of special education in high schools, university programs and special programs

in the Federal Bureau of Education. He was the assistant superintendent of special education at the Louisiana State Department of Education from 1976 to 1982. He then served the state as an educational consultant. Smith was a deacon at First Baptist Baton Rouge where he taught Sunday school and served in many capacities. He was a recipient of many local, state and national awards and honors and served on numerous state and national boards. He is survived by his wife, daughter, son and two grandchildren as well as many nieces and nephews.

### ALUMNA PASSING

#### **NANCY BOGER TAYLOR '53**

died on Dec. 1, 2011 at Charlotte Memorial Hospital. She taught in North Carolina and Virginia before retiring after 28 years in public education. She is survived by two sons, two grandsons and two sisters.

### MIC MORROW '59 A.A.

and Kay Meadows were married on Sept. 10, 2011. Morrow retired from LifeWay Christian Resources as an adult ministry specialist in 2007.

### ALUMNUS PASSING

#### **BRYSON C. SWEETZ '59 A.A.**

passed away on Dec. 27, 2011. Sweetz, a WWII veteran, was an ordained minister for the Western N.C. Conference of the United Methodist Church. He was a member of the American Legion and First United

Methodist Church in Newton, N.C. He is survived by his wife, daughter, son, two sisters and two step-daughters, as well as 11 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

## The 1960s

### SCOTT PADGETT '67 A.A.

is mayor of Concord, N.C. He was recently elected vice chairman of the N.C. Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, a group of mayors committed to promoting policies that support the state's urban centers. As vice chair, Padgett will be a visible representative for the Coalition and its priorities at the N.C. General Assembly, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and other organizations around the state. As a member of the executive committee, Padgett will also be active in setting the Coalition's agenda for the coming year. In addition, Padgett joined the long list of distinguished North Carolinians to receive the Order of the Long Leaf Pine. He was surprised with the recognition on Jan. 27 at the Cabarrus Regional Chamber of Commerce annual meeting in a videotaped presentation by North Carolina Governor Beverly Perdue. Padgett was on stage receiving the Chamber's Lifetime Achievement Award during the luncheon when the recognition was revealed.

## GWU ALUMNUS CARL CARTEE WINS DOVE AWARD FOR INSPIRATIONAL RECORDED SONG OF THE YEAR

When two of his songs were nominated for the same 2012 Dove Award songwriting category, GWU Alumnus Carl Cartee joked that with twice the odds of winning would come twice the disappointment if he lost. As it turns out, he had no reason to worry.

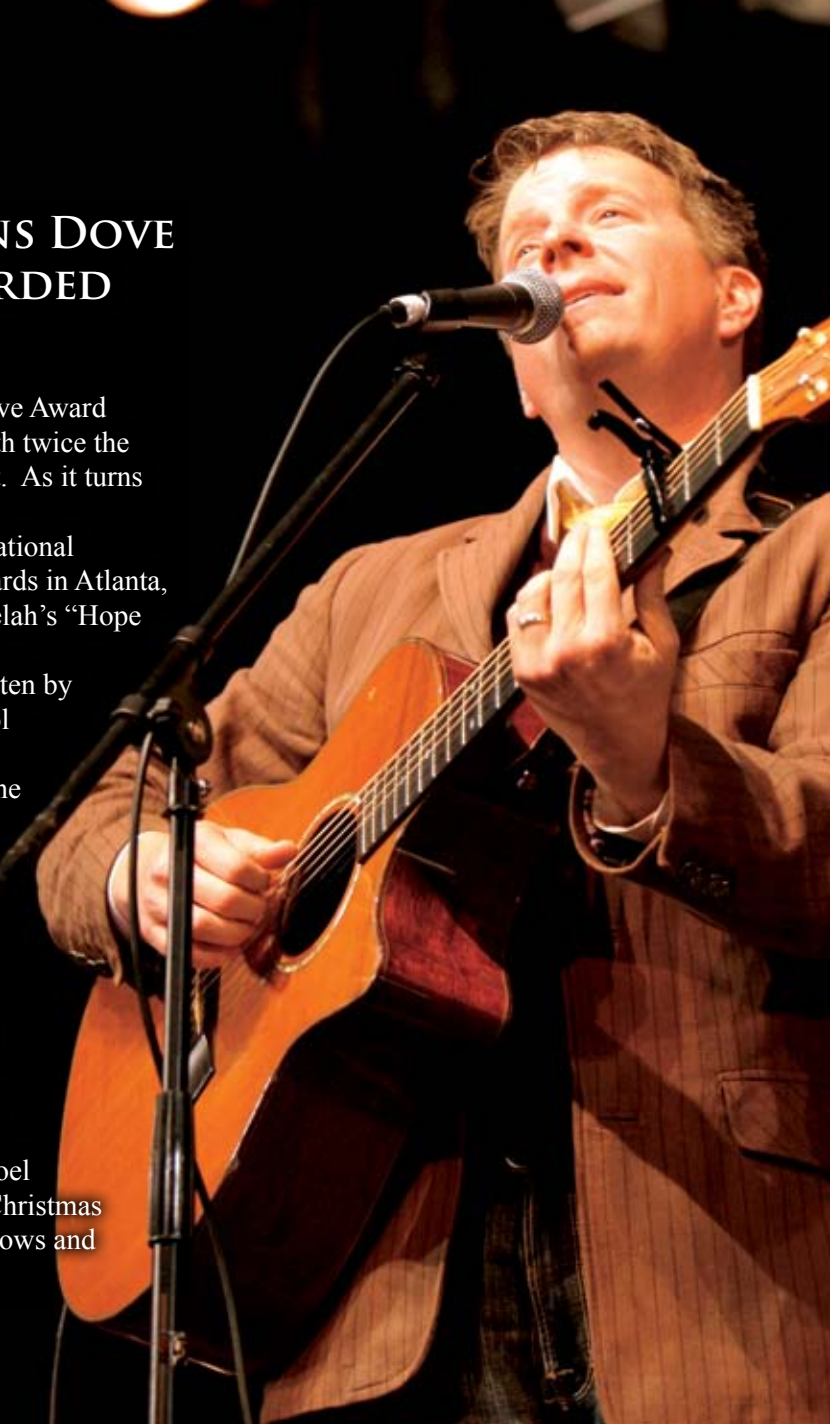
Cartee's song "Hope of the Broken World" took home "Inspirational Recorded Song of the Year" at the 43rd Annual GMA Dove Awards in Atlanta, Ga. The song is co-written by Jennie Riddle and recorded on Selah's "Hope of the Broken World" album.

Cartee's other nominated song was "All Things New," co-written by Jeromy Deibler, Ronnie Freeman and Jason Ingram, on the Nicol Sponberg's album "On Our Way Home."

Cartee, a Cleveland County native, is best known locally for the annual Christmas concert he gave, along with Gardner-Webb University and *The Shelby Star*, to benefit the Salvation Army Food Closet. In its 12 years, the annual Cartee Christmas Concert raised more than 15,000 pounds of food and more than 2,000 toys—not to mention the proceeds from the evenings' CD sales that Cartee always donated.

"As a songwriter, you really appreciate it when professionals who have a valuable opinion say to you that they admire your work," said Cartee of the nominations, which are determined by industry peers.

"It wasn't a matter of if Carl would win; it was when," said Noel Manning, a longtime friend and the coordinator of Cartee's 12 Christmas concerts at Gardner-Webb. "It's a proud day for anyone who knows and loves Carl and his family."



## The 1970s

### ALUMNUS PASSING

#### **ROY WADE SMITH '78**

passed away on May 7, 2010. He retired from the transportation industry and the Cherokee County Sheriff's Department. He was a former member of the Sertoma Club and was a member of Cherokee Avenue Baptist Church where he was a former deacon, Sunday School teacher and choir member. His wife, *Hope H. Smith '76*, and two sons survive him.

### JAMES KENNETH "KEN" STALLS '78 B.A.

was reelected for a second term as President of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware. He celebrated his 20th anniversary in October as senior pastor of South End Baptist Church in Frederick, Md.

## The 1980s

### PHYLLIS ANNE WILSON VON EBERS '85

is a speech-language pathologist for St. Luke's Rehabilitation Hospital and Spokane Public Schools in Spokane, Wash. She lives

in Spokane Valley with her husband, Steve, and daughter, Lydia. Steve is a physical therapist assistant with St. Luke's and Lydia is a senior in high school attending Spokane Falls Community College in Washington state's dual enrollment program. You can find Phyllis on Facebook or email her at [vonebers3@msn.com](mailto:vonebers3@msn.com).

### PATRICIA A. RILEY '85

retired from Wilkes Community College after 31 years of service. She worked for the registrar's office before transferring to the IT department prior to her retirement.

**Do you know of a GWU alum who is making a positive contribution to his or her community?**

**If so, then email us at:  
[alumni@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:alumni@gardner-webb.edu)**

*Verhonda Crawford '12*





# The Southern Appalachian Culture Series Presents The Cherokee Academic Conference

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**October 12-13, 2012 at Gardner-Webb University**

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**PATRICIA HAWKINS '86 B.S.**  
graduated with her Master of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction on Dec. 10, 2011 from Averett University in Danville, Va. Hawkins was one of the first full-time interpreters with the Noel Program at Gardner-Webb. She currently teaches in the Regional Program for the Hearing Impaired through Prince George County Public Schools in Prince George, Va.

She was named "Teacher of Year" at BHS during the 2002-2003 school year and was named the "Walmart Teacher of the Year" in 2008. Sisk also plays the piano for the Blacksburg Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. She is married to Dr. Ron Sisk and they have four children and four grandchildren.

**KEVIN T. BESS '95 B.A.**  
and Katy Bess are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Harper Haynes Bess, born on Aug. 6, 2011. Kevin is a Major in the USAF, flying ground surveillance missions worldwide as a member of the Georgia Air National Guard. He is currently serving overseas on his 13th deployment to the Middle East. Katy is employed by the Macon Medical Center as a Registered Nurse (RN) working in the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CVICU). She is

currently enrolled in Nurse Practitioner School at the University of Alabama Birmingham. Kevin and Katy reside in Warner Robins, Ga.

**DELAINA ADAMS SMITH '95 B.A.**  
was recently named principal of Boomer-Ferguson Elementary School for Wilkes County Schools. She previously served as an assistant principal at the middle and elementary school levels.

**RHONDA IVIE WESSON '97 B.A., '01 M.A.**  
and Mark Lowell Dixon were married Nov. 19, 2011 at Rose Hill in Shelby, N.C. She is employed by Cleveland County Schools as an English teacher at Shelby High School. He is employed by Ethan Allen. The couple resides in Shelby.

## The 1990s

**LYNN SISK '91 B.A.**  
is retiring as a music educator. She has served at Blacksburg High and Middle Schools. Sisk began her teaching career at Ewing Junior High in Gaffney, S.C. before moving to Granard Junior High School.

## Going Green

In an effort to promote environmental sustainability, electronic delivery of The Gardner-Webb Magazine is now available. You'll get all the content from the print version, along with exclusive online content, delivered free, straight to your inbox.

To switch to an electronic subscription, email Noel Manning at [ntmanning@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:ntmanning@gardner-webb.edu).

GARDNER-WEBB COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ALUMNI AND FRIENDS ARE ON

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[www.facebook.com/gardnerwebb](http://www.facebook.com/gardnerwebb)



**AUBREY MOORE PEARSON '98 B.S.**  
and her husband, Curtis, are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Emmeline Rosabelle, who was born on Dec. 21, 2010. Emme-Rose weighed 10 lbs. 9 1/2 oz. and was 22 in. long. Aubrey is a licensing and recruitment specialist with Lutheran Family Services. The family lives in Shelby, N.C.

**TRAVIS CONN '01 B.S.**  
and his wife, Christy, are pleased to announce the birth of their son on Dec. 30, 2011. His name is Colton Joseph Conn.

**RAYLENE BRYSON '04 M.A.**  
is principal at Jackson County Early College and was recently selected as the county's "Principal of the Year."

## The 2000s

**JASON MCMANUS '00 B.S.**  
recently accepted the position of football offensive coordinator at Itawamba Community College in Fulton, Miss.

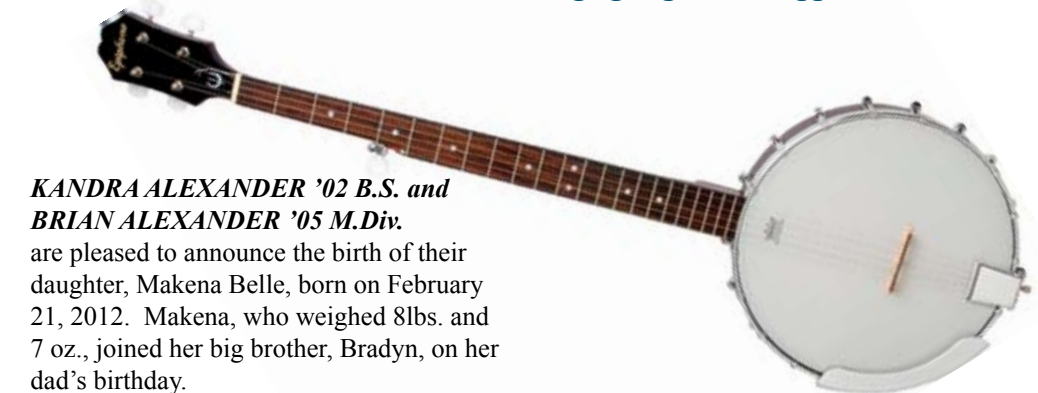
**JACOB BARR '01 M.A.**  
was recently named principal at Pinewood Elementary School. He previously served as principal to Woodhill Elementary School in Gastonia, N.C. Barr has also taught in York and Richland Counties in South Carolina during his 19 years in public education. He and his wife, Winona, have two daughters.

**SUSAN BLACKBURN '01 M.A.**  
is principal at Millers Creek Elementary School. She was selected "Principal of the Year" for Wilkes County Schools. She previously served as principal at West Wilkes Middle School. Blackburn has served on various county level committees and has represented Wilkes in partnerships with Appalachian State and with the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.



## Did you know?

*That Bluegrass Pioneer Earl Scruggs grew up in the Gardner-Webb community and was awarded an honorary doctorate from GWU in 1986. Scruggs was also interviewed numerous times by WGWG 88.3 over the years. Scruggs passed away in March at the age of 88. \*a link to his final interview on WGWG is available here: [www.wgwg.org/earlscruggs](http://www.wgwg.org/earlscruggs).*



**KANDRA ALEXANDER '02 B.S. and BRIAN ALEXANDER '05 M.Div.**  
are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Makena Belle, born on February 21, 2012. Makena, who weighed 8lbs. and 7 oz., joined her big brother, Bradyn, on her dad's birthday.

**AMY CALLAHAN '03 B.A.**  
and Paul J. Miller were married on Nov. 19, 2011 at First Church of Christ in Bradford, Mass. The couple resides in North Andover, Mass.

**MEGAN MILLER '04, '09 M.Div.**  
and Jimmy Starnes were united in marriage on June 25, 2011 in Hudson, N.C. Megan is an ESL teacher in Caldwell County.

**Share your news** If you have a personal or professional accomplishment to share, such as a new job, birth announcement, or a wedding, we would like to hear from you. Submit your class notes to [klovelace@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:klovelace@gardner-webb.edu).



# SERENA

## RON RASH'S NOVEL SERENA HEADED TO BIG SCREEN

For years, fans of Gardner-Webb alumnus and acclaimed novelist Ron Rash ('76) have been clamoring to see Rash's work hit the big screen. In 2014, we'll finally get our wish.

Filming is set to begin on the motion picture adaptation of Rash's bestselling novel *Serena*. Hollywood hotshots Bradley Cooper and Oscar-nominee Jennifer Lawrence, who recently teamed up in David O. Russell's film "The Silver Linings Playbook," will play leading roles. Fans will also recognize Lawrence from her recent performance as Katniss in "The Hunger Games," partially filmed just minutes from Gardner-Webb.

Rash's Depression-era novel tells the story of a timber baron, George Pemberton (Cooper), and his ruthless wife Serena (Lawrence), who move to Western North Carolina to create a business empire. When Serena finds out she cannot bear children, she channels her anger toward her husband's illegitimate son.

The film will be directed by Academy Award winner Susanne Bier of 2929 Productions.

Rash's *Serena* was released in 2008 to rave reviews. Jane Maslin of The New York Times praised Rash's "elegantly fine-tuned voice," and The Washington Post called the novel "too hypnotic to break away from." Among other accolades, it made Publishers Weekly's "Best Books of the Year" list, and was No. 7 on Amazon's list of the 100 best books of 2008.

Rash is a winner of the Fellowship of Southern Writers' James Still Award and a former finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award. His short story collection *Burning Bright* won him the Frank O'Connor Short Story Award, the world's richest prize for the short story form. His most recent novel, *The Cove*, was released in April.

Rash is currently the Parris Distinguished Professor of Appalachian Culture at Western Carolina University. A native of Boiling Springs, Rash credits GWU's professor emerita of English, Dr. Joyce Compton Brown, with sparking his passion for writing. He was awarded the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from GWU in 2009.

## GARDNER-WEBB ALUMNUS NAMED "HOTTEST OLDSTER" BY REDBOOK MAGAZINE

*Written by Jeanie Groh*

Gardner-Webb alumnus Bill Howard ('60) has been named "Hottest Oldster" by the popular women's magazine, *Redbook*. The February 2011 issue featured America's Sexiest Men and included a "Hottest Husband Sweepstakes." Bill's wife, Ann, along with over 2,000 other women, entered her husband in the competition. Much to their delight, Bill was selected as a semifinalist and was named "Hottest Oldster."

"There could be no better husband," Ann states. "I thought he was handsome and hot all those years ago, and I feel the same way today. I fell in love with him because he was a thoughtful, kind person."

"I was 16 and a junior in high school, and he was 20 and entering the Navy when we married," Ann recounts. When she graduated from high school, Ann went out to California to join Bill.

When Bill got out of the Navy, Bill began attending Gardner-Webb College. According to Bill, without Gardner-Webb as a base, life would have been completely different. "Gardner-Webb was a wonderful place to be."

The couple is still madly in love. Bill brings Ann coffee in bed every morning, like he has for the past 61 years. They still love to dance and they have traveled coast to coast and to six continents.

### **MORGAN TUBBS YOUNG '05 B.A.**

was recently named assistant art director for Erwine-Penland, an advertising firm in Greenville, S.C.

### **KELLY WITHERS '06 M.A.**

is principal at Jesse Carson High School. She was recently named the 2012 Wells Fargo Northwest Regional Principal of the Year. She began her career with Rowan-Salisbury School System as a high school science teacher at West Rowan High School in 2000. She then became assistant principal at Carson High School in 2006 before being named principal.

### **MATTHEW BRETT WALTERS '08 B.A. and LINDSAY JAMES WALTERS '08 B.S.N.**

are thrilled to announce the birth of their first child, Luke Maddux Walters, born on Jan. 18, 2012. Luke weighed 7 lbs. 6 oz. and was 21 in. long. Named after the great

Atlanta Braves pitcher Greg Maddux, Luke is expected to hit for average with power to the gaps, and to display above-average range and arm strength in the middle infield.

### **JORDAN DEAN HOYLE '09 B.S. and MEGHAN NICOLE SIPE**

were married on Sept. 10, 2011 at First Baptist Church in Lincolnton, N.C. Both husband and wife are employed at AmerisourceBergen in Charlotte.



Luke Maddux Walters

### **HALEY SPEARMAN '09 B.A.**

is an English 3 teacher at Kings Mountain High School, where she also acts as director of the KMHS Writing Center and is the head coach of the Women's Track and Field Team. In her spare time, Spearman enjoys writing, reading, and being outdoors. She is currently preparing to hike the Appalachian Trail. She is also involved in politics and social activism.

**AUTUMN WIGGINS '09 B.S., '11 M.B.A.** married Branden Reid Essick on Aug. 6, 2011 in Marion, N.C.



Watch Gardner-Webb's latest videos at [www.youtube.com/gardnerwebb1905](http://www.youtube.com/gardnerwebb1905).



# RED AND BLACK

2 0 1 2

FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

## Championships begin with Scholarships

**09/01 WOFFORD (6:00 PM)**

09/08 at Richmond (TBA)

**09/15 SAMFORD (3:00 PM)**

09/22 at Pittsburgh (TBA)

10/06 at Liberty \* (3:30 PM)

**10/13 MID AMERICA NAZARENE (6:00 PM)**

10/20 at Stony Brook \* (TBA)

**10/27 VMI \* (1:30 PM) – Homecoming 2012**

**11/03 COASTAL CAROLINA \* (1:30 PM)**

11/10 at Charleston Southern \* (1:30 PM)

**11/17 PRESBYTERIAN \* (1:30 PM)**

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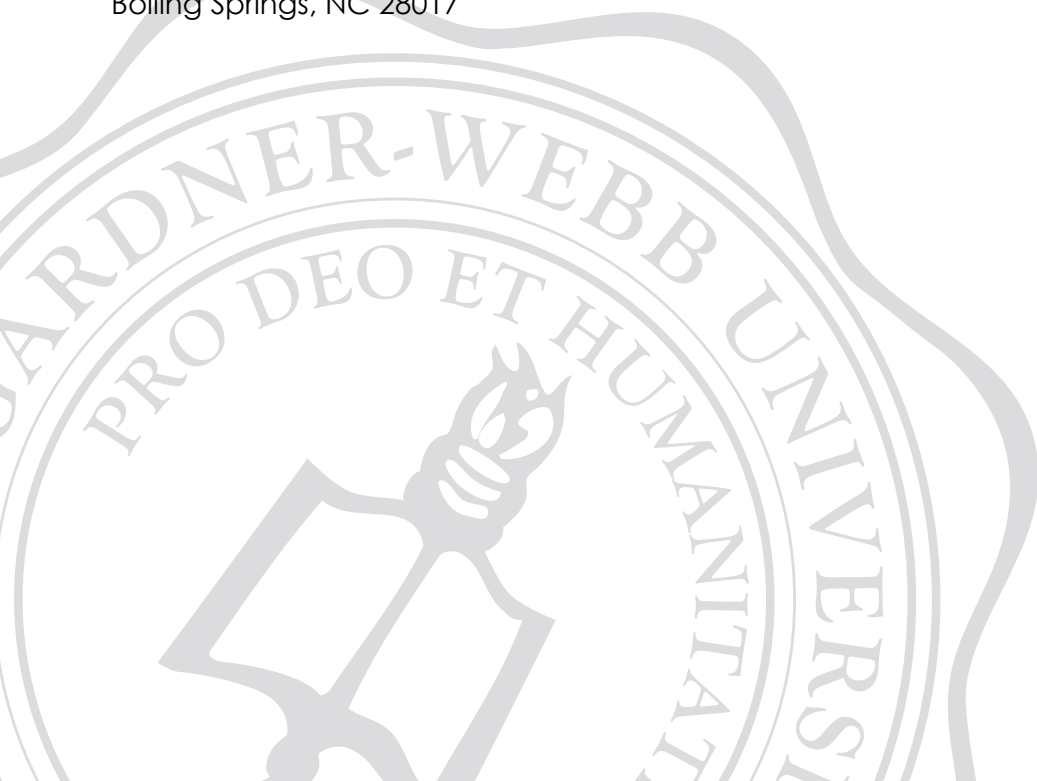




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